

February 11, 2025

Senator Brooks:

I support the general intent of SB0316 but with amendments.

- ◆ **Proposed Amendment: Amend § 7–704.3 (b)(2)(iii) to mandate a full cost-benefit analysis of new transmission projects against these alternatives.**

Why It Matters: This ensures that utilities prioritize smarter, more efficient solutions instead of defaulting to expensive and unnecessary new transmission infrastructure.

- ◆ **Proposed Amendment: Add a new section to Public Utilities Article § 7–1206stating:**

“(E) ANY NEW TRANSMISSION LINES APPROVED UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE PLACED UNDERGROUND UNLESS THE APPLICANT DEMONSTRATES THAT UNDERGROUNDING IS NOT TECHNICALLY FEASIBLE OR THAT THE COST OF UNDERGROUNDING EXCEEDS ALL AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVES, INCLUDING ENERGY STORAGE OR DISTRIBUTED GENERATION.”

Why It Matters: This would protect Maryland’s rural and suburban landscapes, reducing the negative impacts of new transmission while maintaining grid reliability.

- ◆ **Proposed Amendment: Amend § 7–704.3 (b)(2)(ii)(2) to state: “TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, ALL TRANSMISSION UPGRADES SHALL UTILIZE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE BEFORE CONSIDERING NEW CONSTRUCTION, INCLUDING UPGRADING EXISTING TRANSMISSION LINES TO HIGHER VOLTAGE LEVELS AND USING HIGHWAYS OR RAILWAYS FOR NEW TRANSMISSION ROUTES.”**

Why It Matters: This approach would minimize land seizures, environmental damage, and unnecessary spending on new rights-of-way.

- ◆ **Proposed Amendment: Amend § 7–1216 to include:**

“(7) TRANSMISSION EXPANSION PROJECTS THAT ARE NOT REQUIRED TO MEET A DEMONSTRATED GRID RELIABILITY NEED MAY NOT BE FUNDED THROUGH RATE INCREASES ON MARYLAND RATEPAYERS.”
Why It Matters: This prevents unjustified rate hikes that benefit utility companies while burdening residents with increased electricity costs.

These changes would help Maryland transition to clean energy in a fair, cost-effective, and landowner-friendly manner.

**Sincerely,
Dan Lampieri**