

Mary Patton  
5772 Catocin Vista Dr  
Mount Airy, MD  
February 21, 2025

Re: Testimony for HB1224/SB0699 – Forest Conservation Act – Linear Projects - Alteration

Dear Senator Ready:

I am writing to express FAVORABLE support for HB1224/SB0699. I am a landscape architect that regularly prepares forest conservation plans to address the requirements of the Forest Conservation Act. When this act was established, the extent to which new transmission lines would be needed to support things such as data centers was not a critical concern. Now, however, with projects such as the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project, the impact of allowing transmission line projects be exempt from the Forest Conservation Act is of great concern.

The Forest Conservation Act needs to be updated to account for today's era where new energy infrastructure is needed, but infrastructure projects need to be thoughtful and carefully designed. We need to ensure developers are not able to take the easy way out to the detriment of our environment and private lands. Instead, by ensuring that transmission line projects need to follow the requirements of the Forest Conservation Act, our limited forest resources will remain protected while ensuring more careful planning and efficient design for any new distribution line projects.

I ask you to support this bill, to no longer justify deforestation for poorly designed infrastructure projects, and instead require infrastructure projects to follow the requirements of the Forest Conservation Act.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Patton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mary" and last name "Patton" clearly distinguishable.

Mary Patton