

HOUSE BILL 1224

M1, C5

5lr2076
CF SB 699

By: **Delegates Rose, Buckel, Griffith, Hornberger, Mangione, McComas, Miller, Pippy, Reilly, and Stonko**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2025

Assigned to: Economic Matters and Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Forest Conservation Act – Linear Projects – Alteration**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the definition of “linear project” under the Forest Conservation
4 Act to exclude a project for a new transmission line or new distribution line
5 constructed on or after a certain date; and generally relating to tree removal and
6 replacement by electric companies.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
8 Article – Natural Resources
9 Section 5–1601(a), 5–1602(a) and (b)(7), and 5–1606(a)
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
13 Article – Natural Resources
14 Section 5–1601(u)
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
18 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

19 **Article – Natural Resources**

20 5–1601.

21 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

22 (u) **(1)** “Linear project” means a project [whose]:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (ii) High density residential areas;

2 (iii) Mixed use and planned unit development areas; and

3 (iv) Commercial and industrial use areas.

4 (3) Afforestation requirements must conform to the conditions in §§ 5–1607
5 and 5–1610 of this subtitle, including payment into the Forest Conservation Fund, if
6 afforestation on–site or off–site cannot be reasonably accomplished.

7 (4) (i) The afforestation requirements under this subsection shall be
8 accomplished within 1 year or 2 growing seasons after the completion of the development
9 project.

10 (ii) If afforestation cannot be reasonably accomplished on–site or
11 off–site, the requirement to contribute money to a Forest Conservation Fund under §
12 5–1610 of this subtitle shall be met within 90 days after the completion of the development
13 project.

14 (5) Linear projects that involve no change in land use may not be subject
15 to afforestation requirements.

16 (6) Solar photovoltaic facilities may not be subject to afforestation
17 requirements under this subtitle.

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
19 October 1, 2025.