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Testimony in support of HB1396 - Property Rights Protection Act of 2025

To: Economic Matters Committee
From: Elizabeth (“Betsy”) and Michael McFarland

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby and Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

We are residents of Adamstown, Maryland, writing to express our **strong support for HB1396** – Property Rights Protection Act of 2025. This bill is critical in protecting Maryland property owners from unjust land seizures by prohibiting the use of eminent domain for the construction of power lines or certain generating stations. Additionally, it ensures that land under conservation easements cannot be taken for these purposes, reinforcing Maryland’s commitment to environmental preservation and property rights.

As longtime Maryland residents and homeowners in Frederick County, **our property lies directly in the proposed path of the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP)**, which is currently under review by the Maryland Public Service Commission. This project is deeply concerning for many reasons, including:

- Loss of home value
- Destruction of forests and wetlands
- Serious safety risks associated with living next to high-voltage power lines

PSEG has made it clear that they intend to use eminent domain to seize our land. If allowed to proceed, this would not only strip us of our property and cause financial devastation, but it would also result in the destruction of critical natural resources. **Worse yet, all Maryland residents—including those far from the project area—will see higher electricity rates to fund this unnecessary destruction.**

Facing the threat of eminent domain is terrifying. Our home and property are not just where we live—they represent our biggest financial investment. **Now, an out-of-state corporation seeks to take a significant portion of it for their own gain while forcing us to pay for it through higher utility rates.**

We respectfully urge you to support HB1396 and advocate for its passage to protect property owner rights, safeguard conservation efforts, and prevent unnecessary and unjust land seizures in Maryland.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Betsy and Michael McFarland