

Lisa Robinson

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HOUSE BILL HB1270

Natural Resources - Wildland Areas - Overhead Transmission Lines

Hearing: Economic Matters Committee

Date: March 6 at 1:00 PM.

Dear Legislators,

My name is Lisa Robinson, a full time resident of the town of Oakland in Garrett County, Maryland. I moved here from Washington D.C. during the pandemic and work as an independent graphic arts contractor. I also am a part of the workforce in the regional outdoor tourism industry, as a whitewater guide in the summers and as a ski patroller at area ski resorts in the winters. I participate as a volunteer EMT at Southern Garrett County Rescue Squad, as well as the search and rescue organization Mountaineer Area Rescue Group (MARG) based in Morgantown, WV.

I am opposed to House Bill HB1270. My objections to this bill are overwhelmingly due to the knowledge that the perception by tourists of the quality of our wildlands here in Garrett County may directly impact my income. If transmission lines are built through sections of the region of our state that holds the greatest amount of wild area, then Garrett County will cease to hold the imagination of visitors, and they may turn elsewhere.

Next, this bill undermines the law and process by creating a new path for any delegate to submit bills for changes to wildland management, when that is only supposed to be granted to the governor with public input. The bill is counter to the intent of the Wildlands preservation statute to preserve the lands for future generations. There was also no prior disclosure or public engagement on the bill before submission, which does not follow correct procedure. It also cedes General Assembly responsibility to the Public Service Commission.

The areas that the transmission lines are proposed to go through provide protected area for headwater streams, that again, impact my ability to earn a living. Maryland recreational rivers are known for particularly good water quality and entice tourists from hours away to come here, indeed, an entire community in the Mid-Atlantic travels from far away to boat the rivers here.

I ask my legislators to oppose this bill, HB1270.

Sincerely,
Lisa Robinson