



## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

**BILL NO.:** House Bill 645 – Transmission Line Siting – Comprehensive Plan, Recommendation, and Reporting Requirements

**COMMITTEE:** House Economic Matters Committee

**HEARING DATE:** February 20, 2025

**SPONSOR:** Delegate Guyton

**POSITION:** Favorable

On behalf of Stop MPRP, Inc. and the countless Marylanders fighting to protect our environment, farmland, and communities, I submit this testimony in **strong support** of House Bill 645. This essential legislation will ensure that counties and municipalities play a meaningful role in the siting and development of transmission lines, preventing the kind of catastrophic impact seen in the proposed Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP).

### The MPRP's Catastrophic Environmental Impact

The data from the **Routing Study: Appendix F – Proposed Route Analysis Results** demonstrates that the MPRP would permanently scar our state's landscape and communities. According to this report:

- **394.2 acres of forested land** would be cleared, removing crucial carbon-sequestering ecosystems.
- **522.6 acres of cultivated cropland**—the backbone of Maryland's agricultural economy—would be taken out of production.
- **245.8 acres of conservation easement land** would be destroyed, violating the spirit of Maryland's conservation efforts.
- **224.6 acres of land protected under the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF)** would be permanently lost.
- **101 streams and waterbodies** would be crossed by the project's centerline, increasing risks of pollution, erosion, and habitat destruction.
- **139.6 acres of Tier II catchments with no remaining assimilative capacity** would be impacted, further straining Maryland's already fragile waterways.

This project prioritizes corporate interests over public welfare, disregards the voices of impacted communities, and sets a dangerous precedent for future transmission projects. **We must ensure that no other Marylanders suffer the same distress and destruction that this project has caused since its announcement in July 2024.**



## HB 645: A Common-Sense Reform

HB 645 introduces long-overdue accountability in transmission siting by:

- Requiring counties and Baltimore City to incorporate an **electric system planning element** into their comprehensive plans, ensuring that infrastructure planning aligns with local priorities.
- Mandating that electric companies report annually on their efforts to comply with these plans.
- **Requiring the Public Service Commission to consider county and municipal recommendations** when reviewing applications for overhead transmission lines, preventing projects from being imposed on unwilling communities.
- Encouraging responsible siting by prioritizing the **co-location of new transmission lines with existing infrastructure** and supporting underground alternatives.

### A Call for Action: Issue a Favorable Report

The MPRP has inflicted **months of uncertainty, stress, and financial burden** on Marylanders. **HB 645 is our opportunity to ensure that no other community is forced to bear the same hardships.** By strengthening local authority over transmission siting, this bill promotes a balanced approach to energy infrastructure—one that protects Maryland's environment, economy, and communities.

I urge the committee to **issue a favorable report on HB 645** and stand with the residents who have fought tirelessly to preserve our state's land, water, and rural heritage.

### Respectfully submitted,

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President

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