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2314 Benson Mill Road
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February 20 , 2025

Favorable with Amendment - HB 829

Public Utilities - Transmission Lines - Advanced Transmission Technologies

Dear Chairman Wilson and Economic Matters Committee Members,

I am Emily Tarsell, a mother, licensed therapist and founder of Health Choice Maryland. We are all concerned about the environmental, economic and health impact of high intensity power lines. The MPRP issue has been the focus of great concern to many Marylanders whose property, homes, businesses, wildlife and health could be adversely affected.

This bill is similar to HB 657 (SB 483) in that it would require looking into alternatives to the proposed MPRP project and includes suggestions regarding the use of existing power lines and reconductoring. **I want to emphasize that the reconductoring of existing power lines would need to carefully consider that many existing power lines are in residential and farming areas. We should be extremely careful that we would not be just transposing all of the negative effects of high voltage overhead power lines from one proposed area to become the burden of those in another area. What are the health threats of such increased exposure to those living near exiting lines and threats to the environment?**

Epidemiological studies have suggested that human exposure to electromagnetic fields induce an increased risk of developing malignant tumors. No adequate laboratory data have yet been available. However, the trend continues to show that **[exposure to EMF and RFR at levels allowable under current federal public safety limits pose health risks.](#)**

A journal article in the **International Journal of Hygiene Environment and Health** references a number of studies concerned about the health effects of EMF on humans which are still under investigation.

While HB 829 , in addition to requiring the consideration of alternatives to the new construction of power lines would also require various analyses and reports such as a report regarding the electricity need and cost, it does not require studies regarding the safety of EMF on humans, particularly those living near existing power lines.

The existing lines were constructed 65 years ago and it is irresponsible to assume that say doubling the power load on those lines would be safe for those living in the vicinity of the lines. We simply don't know what the impact would be.

Therefore, **I propose an amendment to the bill that would require studies to investigate the effect of the increased high voltage power lines on humans, livestock and wildlife near such re-purposed lines.**

In spirit, we cautiously support HB 829 with an Amendment **as one alternative** provided that Marylanders living near existing power lines are not thereby compromised. There are likely also multiple options to consider to meet Maryland's energy needs which might reduce or alter the need for overhead power lines.

Thank you.

Emily Tarsell, LCPC