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Statement in Support of HB0829

I strongly support HB0829, a landmark bill that will modernize Maryland's approach to transmission infrastructure and protect our communities and environment. For too long, the unchecked construction of massive overhead power lines has been the default solution, often with detrimental consequences. HB0829 offers a smarter, more sustainable path forward.

This bill represents a paradigm shift, prioritizing analysis and innovation over simply building more and bigger transmission lines. By mandating a thorough analysis of alternatives, including advanced transmission technologies, HB0829 ensures that we explore all options before resorting to the seizure of private land and the construction of disruptive overhead lines.

Several key provisions make HB0829 a crucial piece of legislation:

* **Stronger Oversight:** Empowering the PSC to rigorously assess alternative solutions before approving new overhead lines provides much-needed oversight and accountability.

* **Advanced Transmission Technologies:** Encouraging the use of grid-enhancing technologies, high-performance conductors, and energy storage is essential for optimizing our existing infrastructure and maximizing efficiency.

* **Increased Transparency:** Requiring biennial reports from transmission operators will shed light on grid congestion issues, potential solutions, and the costs to ratepayers, fostering greater transparency and public engagement.

* **Protection of Landowners:** Limiting the use of eminent domain protects property owners from unnecessary land seizures and ensures that this power is only used when truly necessary.

* **Comprehensive Planning:** Requiring consideration of alternative energy strategies, such as demand response and distributed energy resources, ensures a holistic approach to energy planning.

HB0829 is not just about transmission lines; it's about building a more resilient, efficient, and sustainable energy future for Maryland. It's about protecting our communities, our environment, and our ratepayers. I urge the legislature to pass HB0829 and usher in a new era of responsible energy planning.

Thank you,

Julie Frye

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