



MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

February 18, 2025

Bill: <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2025RS/bills/hb/hb0657F.pdf>

Committee: Economic Matters

Testimony on HB0657 –Public Utilities –Alternatives to Construction of New Transmission

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) strongly supports HB0657. This bill would require the Public Service Commission to consider alternatives to construction of new transmission lines that would impact historical, environmental, or agricultural preservation areas, or in planned growth areas.

Overhead transmission lines fragment wildlife habitat, and are detrimental to those that depend on deep, forest interiors, such as Kentucky Warblers and Ovenbirds. North America has lost almost 30% of its birds since 1970.¹ Habitat destruction is a major source to that decline. HB0657 will preserve habitat and help preserve our bird and wildlife population.

We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report for HB0657, to protect historical, environmental, or agricultural preservation areas, and planned growth areas.

Kurt R. Schwarz
Conservation Chair Emeritus
Maryland Ornithological Society
www.mdbirds.org

¹ Rosenberg, Kenneth V. et al, Decline of the North American avifauna, Science, VOL 366, NO. 6451, 19 September 2019,
https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aaw1313?adobe_mc=MCORGID%3D242B6472541199F70A4C98A6%2540AdobeOrg%7CTS%3D1707754028