

HB0657_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
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TESTIMONY ON HB#0657 – FAVORABLE
Public Utilities - Alternatives to Construction of New Transmission Lines

TO: Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby and members of the Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#0657, Public Utilities - Alternatives to Construction of New Transmission Lines

This bill is an environmental protection measure that seeks to preserve existing historical, environmental, or agricultural preservation areas from encroachment by new transmission lines. This bill will accomplish that goal by requiring the Public Service Commission to consider the impact of the development of overhead transmission lines on certain properties subject to an existing conservation easement in certain proceedings for a certificate of public convenience and necessity. It establishes that companies wishing to construct transmission lines must do due diligence to document whether alternatives exist that do not impact those areas. It will add protection of any overlap by the construction with certain lots, parcels, or tracts of land such as access roads that will cross the affected areas to provide entry to the site of the transmission lines.

Because of this bill the PSC will have added requirements for evaluation of construction of transmission line projects that takes into account added factors that can and will affect the quality of life and economies of affected jurisdictions and their residents. It will provide tools that can be used in evaluation of proposals by both local and regional transmission organizations for electrical infrastructure construction. It adds to the knowledge base on which an intelligent decision on permitting can occur. It also forces consideration of the ancillary impacts of these construction projects.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#0657.