



WRITTEN TESTIMONY

BILL NO.: House Bill 1219 – Maryland Co-Location Energy Innovation and Reliability Act

COMMITTEE: House Economic Matters Committee

HEARING DATE: February 21, 2025

SPONSOR: Delegates Miller, Hornberger, Mangione, T. Morgan, Pippy, Rose, and Tomlinson

POSITION: Favorable

On behalf of Stop MPRP, Inc. and the many Marylanders fighting to protect our land, farms, and environment, I submit this testimony in strong support of House Bill 1219, the Maryland Co-Location Energy Innovation and Reliability Act. This critical legislation offers a responsible and innovative approach to meeting the energy demands of data centers while preserving Maryland's natural resources and rural communities.

The Energy Demand of Data Centers and the Transmission Burden

The rapid expansion of data centers places unprecedented strain on our energy infrastructure. According to industry estimates, data centers worldwide consume nearly **1–2% of global electricity** and are expected to reach **10% by 2030**. A single hyperscale data center can require upwards of **100 megawatts (MW) of power**, equivalent to **100,000 homes**. The proposed data center growth in Maryland would demand a massive influx of new power, much of which would need to be imported over long-distance high-voltage transmission lines.

To illustrate the scale of this impact, if Maryland were to meet the increasing energy needs of data centers solely through long-distance transmission, it would require **multiple new 500-kV transmission lines** cutting through forests, farms, and protected lands. Such infrastructure expansion would not only disrupt communities but also **fail to provide the resiliency and efficiency needed for a modern energy grid**.

The Environmental Destruction from High-Voltage Transmission Lines

Maryland's reliance on importing power from Pennsylvania and other states via high-voltage transmission lines comes at a severe cost:

- **Loss of Farmland and Forests:** The Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP) alone would clear **394 acres of forested land**, destroy **522 acres of cropland**, and impact **245 acres of conservation easements**. Expanding transmission corridors to support unchecked data center growth would multiply these losses.
- **Harm to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed:** The construction of large transmission lines increases **erosion, runoff, and water contamination**, threatening the



Chesapeake Bay’s delicate ecosystem. Over **100 streams and waterbodies** would be crossed by the MPRP alone, leading to potential degradation of Maryland’s already fragile waterways.

- **Increased Reliance on Out-of-State Generation:** Importing electricity often means relying on fossil-fuel-based power plants in Pennsylvania, increasing emissions while shifting Maryland’s clean energy responsibilities elsewhere.

A Smarter Solution: Localized Energy Generation with Data Center Co-Location

HB 1219 provides a **forward-thinking alternative**—requiring data centers to **co-locate with their own power generation** rather than burdening Maryland’s residents with new transmission infrastructure. This policy ensures:

1. **Grid Independence** – Data centers will **generate their own power on-site**, reducing stress on Maryland’s transmission system.
2. **Environmental Protections** – By **eliminating the need for long-distance transmission lines**, we prevent deforestation, land loss, and ecosystem damage.
3. **Energy Innovation** – HB 1219 fosters **advanced energy solutions**, such as small modular nuclear, hydrogen, and microgrid technologies, ensuring data centers operate efficiently and sustainably.
4. **Economic & Reliability Benefits** – Keeping generation local ensures **energy resiliency**, job creation, and infrastructure that directly benefits Maryland instead of out-of-state utilities.



A Call for Action: Issue a Favorable Report on HB 1219

Maryland should not allow reckless transmission expansion to destroy our state's farmland, forests, and communities. Instead, we must embrace **responsible, innovative energy solutions** that allow data centers to grow while **protecting Maryland's environment and energy future**.

I urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on HB 1219 and take a stand for **sustainable energy planning** in Maryland.

Respectfully submitted,

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