



## Maryland Farm Bureau

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**To:** House Economic Matters Committee

**From:** Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

**RE: Support – HB1079 - Public Service Commission - Study on the Electric Transmission and Distribution System**

On behalf of the Maryland Farm Bureau and our nearly 8,000 member families, we express our support for House Bill 1079, which directs the Public Service Commission to study the electric transmission and distribution system in our state. This critical initiative has the potential to enhance electric reliability while protecting Maryland's farmland and rural communities.

As stewards of Maryland's agricultural economy, farmers rely on a stable and efficient electrical grid to power essential operations, including irrigation systems, cold storage, and processing facilities. Frequent power disruptions or inefficient transmission can lead to significant losses in agricultural productivity and profitability. The study proposed in HB 1079 will provide a comprehensive assessment of grid-enhancing technologies that can maximize the efficiency of our existing infrastructure without the need for expanding transmission lines into valuable farmland.

By utilizing technologies such as dynamic line rating, power flow controllers, and topology optimization, Maryland can optimize its current electric grid to meet increasing energy demands while minimizing the need for new transmission corridors. This approach not only ensures a more reliable power supply for our farmers but also helps preserve our agricultural landscapes by preventing unnecessary land development that could disrupt farming operations and reduce available cropland.

Furthermore, HB 1079 encourages investment in modern grid solutions that enhance cybersecurity and physical security. Given the increasing reliance on electric-powered agricultural equipment and automated systems, it is crucial to ensure the grid's resilience against both natural and man-made threats. Implementing innovative energy solutions such as microgrids, two-way meters, and demand response systems can further strengthen Maryland's agricultural sector by providing more localized and adaptive power management options.

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