

February 28, 2025

Dear Members of the Maryland General Assembly,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB1218, a bill that is not just necessary but long overdue in ensuring Maryland's energy future is built on facts, transparency, and community-driven planning rather than corporate convenience. For too long, transmission projects have been pushed forward without rigorous analysis of necessity, alternative solutions, or long-term consequences. The Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP) is the latest and most urgent example of this broken process; however, without HB1218, it will not be the last.

HB1218 takes the rational and responsible approach of halting all new transmission line approvals until May 2026 while a Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland conducts a comprehensive review of our state's energy needs. This review will examine forecasts for 2026, 2030, 2035, and 2040; assess Maryland's dependence on imported electricity; and explore cost-effective energy supply options, including nuclear, renewables, and storage solutions. In other words, HB1218 ensures we plan for the future with real data rather than allowing utilities to dictate our energy policies based on their financial interests.

The need for this bill is best illustrated by the MPRP, a project that threatens to seize private land, devalue properties, and impose long-term environmental and economic damage; all while Maryland continues to import a massive percentage of its electricity rather than investing in self-sufficiency. When Delegate Mangione pressed PSEG on whether they had explored alternatives to new transmission, they admitted they had not even considered it until public outcry forced them to. Only after being questioned did they rush to produce a study that conveniently reaffirmed their original plan. This is not how responsible energy planning should work.

The homeowners, farmers, and families in the path of MPRP are living in limbo, unsure if their land will be taken, if their financial security will collapse, or if their communities will be permanently scarred; all for a project whose necessity has not been fully vetted. It is unacceptable that residents must fight tooth and nail after a project has been proposed just to get the basic answers that should have been required from the start. HB1218 corrects this backward process by ensuring Maryland conducts real planning before authorizing massive, landscape-altering infrastructure.

This bill does not just stop MPRP; it protects Maryland from future transmission overreach. By requiring a pause in approvals, HB1218 ensures that future projects are built only when they are truly necessary, cost-effective, and aligned with Maryland's long-term energy

goals. No longer will transmission expansion be the default solution when better alternatives exist. Maryland must first invest in local energy generation to reduce its dependence on imported electricity; modernize the existing grid before carving up private land for new transmission corridors; and protect property owners from unnecessary and unfair eminent domain claims.

In addition to preventing unnecessary transmission expansion, HB1218 ensures that Maryland's energy strategy keeps pace with rapid technological advancements. One of the most frequently cited justifications for large-scale grid expansion has been the expectation of skyrocketing power consumption, particularly due to the rise of artificial intelligence and data centers. However, recent advancements in AI efficiency and chip technology have significantly reduced power consumption projections; what once appeared to be an impending surge in demand is now being reconsidered by energy analysts worldwide.

Maryland must ensure that we are solving today's energy challenges, not building costly, outdated infrastructure to address problems that may never materialize at the scale once predicted. The rapid evolution of AI and cloud computing demonstrates how quickly assumptions about future electricity needs can become obsolete. Rather than locking ourselves into unnecessary transmission expansion based on outdated models, HB1218 ensures that our energy planning reflects the most current and accurate data available.

We must ask ourselves who benefits when transmission projects are fast-tracked without a complete picture of our state's energy future. The answer is not the ratepayers, landowners, or local communities; it is the utilities and transmission developers who profit from large-scale expansion, regardless of whether it is actually needed. HB1218 puts the power back where it belongs in the hands of data-driven decision-making and public accountability.

Maryland has the opportunity to be a national leader in responsible energy planning. We can choose facts over assumptions; fairness over expediency; and long-term stability over short-term profits. But to do that, we must act now. I urge you to vote in favor of HB1218 to ensure Maryland's energy infrastructure serves its people, not just its corporations.

Thank you.

Bryan Price