



MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

February 18, 2025

Bill: <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2025RS/bills/hb/hb0640F.pdf>

Committee: Economic Matters

**Testimony on HB0640—Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity—Overhead
Transmission Lines—Conservation Easements**

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) strongly supports HB0640. With over 60% of land in the United States in private hands, private property is crucial to preserving wildlife habitat. HB 0034 would require the Public Service Commission to consider alternative routes or to alter proposed routes when they would cross a conservation easement. An applicant must also minimize impact of the transmission line on the easement. We believe that every effort should be made to preserve a conservation easement that a proposed transmission line would impact.

North America has lost almost 30% of its birds since 1970.¹ Habitat destruction is a major source to that decline. SB0034 will preserve habitat and help preserve our bird and wildlife population.

We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report for HB0640, to protect conservation easements and wildlife habitat.

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