



**HoCoClimateAction.org**  
Howard County, Maryland

**HB0829 – Transmission Lines - Advanced Transmission Technologies**

**Hearing Date: March 26, 2025**

**Bill Sponsor: Delegate Charkoudian**

**Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment**

**Submitting: Liz Feighner for Howard County Climate Action**

**Position: Favorable**

HoCo Climate Action is a [350.org](https://350.org) local chapter and a grassroots organization representing approximately 1,400 subscribers. We are also a member of the [Climate Justice Wing](#) of the [Maryland Legislative Coalition](#).

We urge you to vote favorably on **HB0829, Advanced Transmission Technologies**, which strengthens the Public Service Commission (PSC) process for issuing a certificate of public convenience and necessity (CPCN) for construction of an overhead transmission line to include analyses of “advanced transmission technologies” and alternate routes. The solutions in the bill can be implemented more quickly and cost effectively than ill-conceived proposals like new gas-fired power plants and untested small modular nuclear reactors which would inevitably take longer to come online and jeopardize the state meeting its climate requirements.

There are cost-effective advanced technologies available today that can help us get more out of our existing transmission system. Maryland is faced with challenges regarding the adequacy of our transmission system to deliver the right amount of power to the right regions of the state. Building new transmission lines is extremely expensive and highly controversial. Case in point, Maryland ratepayers will bear the [\\$796 million cost for making transmission upgrades](#) (*costs have ballooned to over \$1 billion*) to handle the planned retirement of the Brandon Shores and Wagner power plants. In addition, the [Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project is extremely controversial](#) with opposition from landowners, farmers, communities and elected officials.

Electricity costs are increasing rapidly in large part because of problems with PJM, our grid operator. Proposed clean renewable energy projects have been stuck in [PJM's interconnection queue](#) for years and the queue has been so long that they [stopped accepting projects](#) at one point. By the time projects clear the queue and are approved, they are no longer financially viable and many are not built. Now, increasing electricity demand due to high-intensity energy use facilities like data centers plays a major role in our rising rates. We need to get more out of our existing transmission system while saving ratepayer dollars.

HB0829 represents a comprehensive approach to modernizing Maryland's transmission system using best practices for modern approaches and technologies that are cost-effective and currently employed by other states or utilities. Maryland will join twenty other states that are taking steps to implement [initiatives to spur grid-enhancing technologies, advanced conductors](#)). [Grid-enhancing technologies \(GETs\)](#) are a suite of software and hardware technologies that boost the ability of transmission lines to carry more power and are typically deployed faster and at a lower cost than traditional options, such as new lines and substations. [Advanced conductors](#) are a modern, commercialized technology that increases line capacity up to two-fold.

HB0829 is a common-sense and cost-effective approach to improving Maryland's transmission system. For all of these reasons, we strongly support HB0829 and urge a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.

Howard County Climate Action

Submitted by Liz Feighner, Steering and Advocacy Committee

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