



WRITTEN TESTIMONY

BILL NO.: Senate Bill 37 – Utility Transparency and Accountability Act

COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

HEARING DATE: [Insert Date]

SPONSOR: Senator Hester

POSITION: Favorable

On behalf of **Stop MPRP, Inc.**, I respectfully submit this testimony in **strong support** of Senate Bill 37, which requires electric companies to submit annual reports to the Public Service Commission (PSC) detailing their recorded votes at regional transmission organization (RTO) meetings. This legislation is critical to ensuring greater transparency and accountability in decisions that impact Maryland residents, ratepayers, and communities.

The Lack of Transparency in RTO Decision-Making Hurts Marylanders

Maryland's electric grid is largely controlled by **PJM Interconnection**, an RTO that operates with little public scrutiny despite making decisions that affect land use, electricity rates, and infrastructure expansion. These decisions—including the proposed **Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP)**—are being made behind closed doors, with **no clear record of how electric companies and their affiliates vote on key issues.**

For communities in **Baltimore, Carroll, and Frederick Counties**, the burden of this lack of transparency has been immense. The MPRP threatens **farms, forests, and private landowners** while being justified through a process that is **opaque and inaccessible to the public.** Affected residents have had to spend extensive time and resources trying to understand the rationale behind this transmission project—with little ability to see the truth behind the project.

The Burden on Communities Fighting Unjust Transmission Expansion

The proposed MPRP is a **prime example** of why transparency in RTO decision-making is needed. The project would:

- **Clear hundreds of acres** of forest and farmland, permanently altering the landscape.
- **Disrupt local communities** with new high-voltage transmission lines forced through private properties.
- **Lack proper state oversight**, as critical decisions are made at PJM with minimal disclosure to Maryland officials.

Residents and landowners have had to organize opposition efforts, hire legal counsel, and navigate complex regulatory proceedings—all **without full access to how decisions were made.** This is an unfair burden, especially when transmission expansion is being driven by utility companies that stand to benefit financially.



SB0037 Provides a Simple but Critical Solution

By requiring utility companies to disclose their recorded votes at RTO meetings, **SB0037 provides Marylanders with the transparency they deserve.** This bill will:

- **Ensure public accountability** by allowing residents, landowners, and policymakers to see how decisions are being made.
- **Prevent undue influence** by making it harder for utilities to push through projects that primarily benefit corporate interests.
- **Strengthen Maryland’s regulatory oversight** of energy decisions that impact communities, ratepayers, and rural lands.

We Must Hold Utility Companies Accountable

Maryland’s energy policies should **reflect the interests of the people, not just the priorities of large utilities.** Without SB0037, the public will remain in the dark about the decision-making process at PJM—allowing transmission projects like MPRP to advance with **no meaningful public oversight.**

On behalf of **Stop MPRP, Inc.**, we urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on SB0037 to bring much-needed transparency and accountability to Maryland’s energy decision-making process.

Respectfully submitted,

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