



TESTIMONY FOR SB0955

Overhead Transmission Lines - Eminent Domain

Bill Sponsor: Senator Brooks

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB0955 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members respect the need of the utilities in the state to build more transmission lines to service a growing data center expansion in the state. One of the techniques being used to acquire the land for the transmission line build is to buy property near the property the utility needs and diminishing the value of the property they want to seize by starting to build overhead transmission lines. Then, the utility initiates condemnation proceedings to get the adjoining property.

This practice is harming not only farmers in rural areas but also causing land in conservation areas to be used for transmission lines. This bill would prevent this practice by prohibiting the condemnation of private property on a conservation easement by diminishing it due to the purchase of other property within 500 feet of the owner's property that was then used for the construction of overhead transmission lines.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.