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PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Chair Brian Feldman
Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 953 – Favorable with Amendments – Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members:

The Public Service Commission (the Commission) requests a favorable report for Senate Bill 953 (SB 953) with amendments detailed in this testimony. The Commission supports examining the electricity needs of Maryland and how to serve them and can participate in the proposed task force. The Commission notes that the proposed timeline for the study may be aggressive but defers to the Maryland Energy Administration as to the required resources necessary to complete the required studies.

The Commission suggests two amendments to the proposed legislation. First the Commission suggests that the legislation either strike or clarify the use of the word “realistic” in the proposed legislation. The term “realistic” will mean different things to different task force members regarding what may occur in the future. The Commission suggests that instead the task force be directed to develop and study different scenarios that reflect certain criteria provided by the legislature in lieu of the term “realistic.”

Second, the Commission requests that uncodified section 2 be struck from the proposed legislation. This section prohibits the issuance of a certificate of public necessity and convenience for transmission from July 1, 2025, until May 1, 2026. As the legislation would only apply prospectively, this prohibition will not impact currently proposed transmission projects. However, it could cause a delay in additional transmission development. Given the current status of power generation and resource adequacy, a moratorium on certificating new transmission could exacerbate reliability and cost concerns.

The Public Service Commission appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony for your consideration for bill SB 953. We request a favorable report with support for the amendments detailed above. We look forward to continuing to work with the sponsor to optimize the legislation for productive enactment. Please contact Christina Ochoa, Director of Legislative Affairs at christina.ochoa1@maryland.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frederick H. Hoover". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'F' and 'H'.

Frederick H. Hoover, Chair
Maryland Public Service Commission