

**BILL NUMBER:** Senate Bill 0034

**Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity - Overhead Transmission Lines - Conservation Easements**

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

**HEARING DATE:** February 13, 2025

**SPONSOR:** Senators Brooks and Hettleman

**POSITION:** Favorable

Chair Brian Feldman, Vice Chair Cheryl Kagen and Members of the Committee,

As a professional electric power engineer and Maryland resident concerned with the effects of climate change, I ask for a Favorable Report on SB 0034.

Adoption of this Act is timely considering the controversy created by the PSEG proposed Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project transmission line. Maryland stands in the unenviable position of being between energy rich Pennsylvania and energy starved Virginia. Even if the MPRP transmission line is denied by the Public Service Commission, it will be the first of many attempts to plow through Maryland's most valuable agricultural and preserved land to feed Virginia's hungry data centers.

This Act requires the Public Service Commission to consider the impact of the development of overhead transmission lines on certain properties subject to an existing conservation easement in certain proceedings for a certificate of public convenience and necessity; requiring the Commission to require an applicant for a certificate of public convenience and necessity for the development of overhead transmission lines to consider alternative routes for transmission lines affecting conservation easements or alter proposed routes; and generally relating to certificates of public convenience and necessity.

The requirements listed above and others in the Act will help secure Maryland's future as a state that provides the power citizens and businesses need to function while honoring our laws that protect the environment.

Thank you,

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