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Testimony in support of SB483 - Public Utilities – Alternatives to Construction of New Transmission Lines

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
From: Elizabeth (“Betsy”) and Michael McFarland

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

We are residents of Adamstown, Maryland, writing to express our strong support for SB483 - Public Utilities – Alternatives to Construction of New Transmission Lines. This bill is critical in ensuring that the Public Service Commission thoroughly evaluates alternatives before approving new transmission projects.

As longtime Maryland residents and homeowners in Frederick County, our property lies directly in the proposed path of the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP), currently under review by the Maryland Public Service Commission. This project is deeply concerning for many reasons—including potential loss of home value, destruction of forests and wetlands on our property, and serious safety concerns about living next to high-voltage power lines.

Even more troubling, the MPRP relies on outdated technology and may be obsolete before it’s even operational. PJM and PSEG failed to conduct a thorough analysis of modern alternatives and instead proposed the option that was fastest, cheapest, and most profitable for their corporate interests—at the direct expense of Maryland landowners and ratepayers.

If private property is to be taken through eminent domain, the state must first ensure that the project is truly necessary and that no better alternatives exist. SB483 is essential to protecting Maryland’s landscapes, private property rights, and conservation efforts from unnecessary and irreversible destruction.

We urge you to support SB483 and stand with Maryland homeowners, farmers, and communities who deserve responsible energy planning.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Betsy and Michael McFarland