

HB 829 SUPPORT
Public Utilities - Transmission Lines - Advanced Transmission
Technologies

Economic Matters Committee

March 26, 2025

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic
Matters Committee:

I'm Rob Gramlich, President of Grid Strategies LLC, an electric transmission policy consulting firm based in Washington, DC. I have been working on transmission issues for 30 years including 8 years as a senior official at the US Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and 2 years as Senior Economist at PJM Interconnection.

I am appearing today in support of House Bill 829. Our firm has run the Working for Advanced Transmission Technologies (WATT) Coalition since it was formed in 2017 on behalf of Grid Enhancing Technology (GETs) vendors, energy generation, and utility members. Much of my work is on building large-scale transmission lines, which is a key part of the solution, but GETs have an important role to play in unlocking capacity in the near term and optimizing infrastructure decisions moving forward. Grid Strategies also administers the Advancing Modern Powerlines (AMP) Coalition for High Performance Conductors (HPCs), which can double capacity on transmission rights-of-way when compared to traditional conductors.

I strongly support the provision for utilities to study Advanced Transmission Technologies (ATTs) to reduce past and projected grid congestion. From 2019 to 2023, transmission congestion increased wholesale electricity prices in the PJM Interconnection by \$5.675 billion. While it's not transparent how much those costs affected Maryland, reducing grid congestion will save ratepayers money. GETs can often reduce congestion by 40% or more. For example, dynamic line ratings take advantage of transmission lines being able to carry much more electricity on days like today, when cold winds cool the line.

By not evaluating these technologies, utilities are leaving money on the table. The requirement for a regular study of the opportunity for these technologies

to reduce congestion is a good step for utilities to take. In the long term, ATTs should be fully integrated into transmission planning and operations – tools in the toolbox. This legislation will help push towards that future. Utilities are not rewarded for reducing congestion through rates or any other mechanism, so a requirement is appropriate to unlock this value.

On the requirement for ATTs to be studied as alternatives to new lines, ATTs should primarily be considered to maximize the value of new infrastructure. The requirement for inclusion in CPCN applications should prioritize using ATTs to increase asset utilization and flexibility and reduce constraints during the planning and construction of new infrastructure. With that amendment, I urge a favorable report on HB 829.