

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 947 (SB 947), the Maryland Co-Location Energy Innovation and Reliability Act. This legislation is critical in addressing the reckless expansion of data centers and their relentless demand for energy. Without forward-thinking policies like SB 947, Maryland risks being steamrolled by corporate interests, much like we've seen with the disastrous Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP) and the utility giant PSEG. These projects prioritize profit over people, gutting communities, devastating farmland, and forcing Marylanders to foot the bill for infrastructure that only serves corporate greed.

Data centers are among the most energy-hungry facilities in the world, consuming massive amounts of electricity to sustain cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and digital services. Virginia has already been overrun by this unchecked expansion, where transmission lines have carved up rural communities, destroyed forests, seized homes, and erased farmland, all while shifting the costs onto residents. Maryland must not follow in its footsteps. Texas and North Carolina have also seen skyrocketing energy costs and grid instability as utilities scramble to meet the ever-growing demand of these tech behemoths. Yet time and again, utilities like PSEG insist on building massive new transmission lines instead of embracing smarter, localized solutions that would actually benefit ratepayers.

Adding insult to injury, the recent PJM TEAC meeting has confirmed what many of us suspected all along: the MPRP is not designed to benefit Maryland residents at all. Instead, the transmission line will bypass Maryland entirely, directly connecting Virginia to Pennsylvania. The official documentation from PJM states:

"Terminate the Woodside-Goose Creek 500 kV line into Doubs substation, creating the Woodside-Doubs No. 2 500 kV line. Remove the Chanceford-Doubs and Rocky Point-Doubs line terminations at the Doubs substation and connect the two lines through a 0.6-mile 500 kV bypass line around the Doubs substation."

This confirms that MPRP is bypassing Maryland substations altogether, proving that the project is not about serving Marylanders: it is about fueling Northern Virginia's data center expansion at our expense. Why should Maryland sacrifice its most beautiful scenic landscapes, its farmland, family homes, and its environmental integrity so that Virginia can recklessly expand its data center industry? This is an egregious overreach that must be stopped.

Other nations have taken proactive steps to rein in these harmful practices. Singapore, recognizing the dangers of an overburdened grid, has imposed strict limits on data center expansion, requiring higher energy efficiency and localized power generation. Germany has prioritized decentralized energy production to avoid the kind of transmission-line sprawl that has already marred states like Virginia. Canada has implemented regional energy caps, ensuring that data centers generate their own power rather than siphoning it from the public grid and driving up costs for everyday people.

SB 947 is Maryland's opportunity to avoid the same pitfalls. By mandating that data centers generate their own on-site power, this bill eliminates the need for massive new high-voltage transmission lines, the kind that companies like PSEG are all too eager to impose on us. These lines not only deface our landscapes but also force Maryland residents to subsidize infrastructure that primarily benefits massive corporations. The MPRP is a perfect example of this—an unnecessary, destructive project designed to maximize profits at the expense of Maryland's natural beauty and energy security.

Furthermore, SB 947 strengthens Maryland's energy reliability. We've already seen how unchecked data center expansion can destabilize grids, leading to blackouts and supply shortages. Keeping these massive energy consumers off the public grid ensures that Maryland's existing infrastructure remains stable and that ratepayers aren't left to pick up the pieces after another corporate free-for-all.

Enough is enough. Maryland cannot afford to be bullied by utility monopolies and Big Tech interests that prioritize profits over the well-being of our state. SB 947 offers a smarter, more sustainable path—one that values our communities, preserves our landscapes, and ensures that Marylanders are not forced to bankroll corporate infrastructure.

I urge the committee to support SB 947 and take a stand against the reckless expansion that has already wreaked havoc in other states. Let's stop rubber-stamping transmission-heavy projects that strip Maryland of its land, raise energy costs, and undermine grid reliability. We have a chance to do better. Now is the time to take it.

Sincerely,

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