

Oppose
Education, Energy, and the
Environment
3/6/2025

Senate Bill 853 – Public Service Commission – Transmission Line Siting – Limitations

Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE) opposes *Senate Bill 853 – Public Service Commission - Transmission Line Siting – Limitations*. Senate Bill 853 prohibits the Public Service Commission (Commission) from authorizing the construction of an overhead transmission line that does not utilize an existing transmission right-of-way unless the applicant adequately demonstrates existing transmission rights-of-ways are not sufficient for the proposed transmission line. Then, the Commission may only authorize the construction of the new transmission line within 0.25 miles of an existing overhead transmission line.

As a utility providing electricity to 1.3 million customers and natural gas to more than 700,000 customers in Central Maryland, BGE is concerned this legislation would create additional financial and operational burdens that economically disadvantage Maryland customers and impede progress in addressing critical regional resource adequacy challenges in the State.

Senate Bill 853 will greatly limit where overhead transmission lines can be constructed and imposes additional administrative requirements that are redundant. These additional requirements will likely result in increased costs for Maryland residents and potential delays in the siting of new transmission lines, which are essential for addressing the resource adequacy challenges in the State. The current Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) process at the Commission already requires an applicant seeking to construct a new overhead transmission line to consider the use of existing transmission line rights-of-way as well as alternative routes for the proposed line. Utilities seek to utilize existing rights-of-way to the greatest extent possible due to the cost and time associated with acquiring new real estate rights. The Commission must balance this consideration with what is in the best interest of the State as a whole. One of the primary reasons for the enactment of the CPCN process was to create one process for the consideration of the siting and permitting of energy infrastructure projects that are necessary and important to the State.

Furthermore, any restrictions on constructing new transmission lines within a certain distance of existing transmission corridors would undermine the necessary flexibility for utilities and the Commission to evaluate all potential routes. This flexibility is crucial for identifying optimal routes that best serve the public interest by balancing costs, impacts on natural resources, socioeconomic factors, and addressing reliability and economic issues.

BGE remains committed to supporting Maryland's energy transition and supports policies that keep affordability, resiliency, and reliability a priority. Senate Bill 853 will cause higher energy bills for Maryland residents, and reduced reliability and safety of the electrical grid due to project delays caused by increased administrative processes and burdens. For these reasons, BGE requests an unfavorable report.

BGE, headquartered in Baltimore, is Maryland's largest gas and electric utility, delivering power to more than 1.3 million electric customers and more than 700,000 natural gas customers in central Maryland. The company's approximately 3,400 employees are committed to the safe and reliable delivery of gas and electricity, as well as enhanced energy management, conservation, environmental stewardship and community assistance. BGE is a subsidiary of Exelon Corporation (NYSE: EXC), the nation's largest energy delivery company.

Charles Washington | Brittany Jones | Guy Andes | Dytonia Reed | 410.269.5281