

Testimony in Support of SB 0853.pdf

Uploaded by: Brenda Myers

Position: FAV

Testimony in Support of SB 0853

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Brenda Myers and I am here today to strongly support Senate Bill 0853 (SB 0853). This legislation is a critical step toward ensuring that Maryland's energy infrastructure expansion does not come at the expense of farmland, private property, and rural communities. As someone deeply concerned about the future of our state's landscapes and communities, I urge this committee to pass SB 0853 to protect our land and promote responsible energy development.

Why SB 0853 Matters

The Maryland General Assembly is considering SB 0853 at a pivotal time. This bill places necessary restrictions on the construction of new overhead transmission lines. Specifically, it prevents the Public Service Commission (PSC) from approving new overhead lines unless it is demonstrated that existing rights-of-way are insufficient. Additionally, if new transmission lines are deemed necessary, they must be constructed within a quarter-mile of an existing transmission corridor, rather than cutting through untouched farmland and conservation areas. This legislation also reinforces local authority over permitting decisions, ensuring that counties and municipalities retain control over their land use.

Stopping the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP)

SB 0853 is especially important in the fight against the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP), a high-voltage transmission project proposed by PJM Interconnection. This project threatens to:

- **Seize private land through eminent domain**, forcing property owners to give up their land for corporate gain.
- **Damage farmland and historic preservation areas**, undermining Maryland's agricultural economy and erasing irreplaceable cultural heritage.
- **Lower property values**, as high-voltage lines disrupt rural communities and reduce the appeal of affected areas.
- **Ignore viable alternatives**, such as upgrading existing transmission lines, undergrounding infrastructure, or investing in local energy solutions.

The MPRP represents an outdated and reckless approach to energy development. SB 0853 challenges this mindset by requiring developers to prove that new corridors are

the only viable option, rather than allowing them to indiscriminately carve up Maryland's rural landscapes.

A Smarter Approach to Energy Infrastructure

Opposing unnecessary transmission projects like the MPRP does not mean opposing progress. Instead, SB 0853 promotes a **more responsible and forward-thinking approach** to energy infrastructure by encouraging:

- **Optimization of existing transmission lines**, ensuring that upgrades and modern grid technologies are prioritized over new construction.
- **Consideration of alternative solutions**, such as grid-enhancing technologies, reconductoring, and distributed energy generation, which can improve reliability without new overhead transmission lines.
- **Respect for local communities, farms, and conservation land**, ensuring that energy expansion does not come at the expense of Maryland's natural and historical heritage.

Conclusion: Protecting Maryland's Future

SB 0853 is a necessary safeguard against irresponsible energy infrastructure projects that threaten private property, rural communities, and Maryland's rich agricultural and historical landscape. This bill ensures that transmission expansion is undertaken only when absolutely necessary and in a way that minimizes harm to landowners and the environment.

By supporting SB 0853, we are choosing a future where energy infrastructure development is balanced, efficient, and respectful of Maryland's communities and natural resources. I urge the committee to pass SB 0853 and take a stand for responsible energy planning.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brenda Myers

Hampstead, Maryland

SB853 Price.pdf

Uploaded by: Brysn Price

Position: FAV

Testimony in Support of SB 853 Presented by Bryan Price Maryland State Senate Hearing on SB 853

Chair, Vice Chair, and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 853 (SB 853). My name is Bryan Price, and I am a Maryland resident deeply invested in responsible energy planning and infrastructure development. The Maryland General Assembly has an opportunity with SB 853 to take a crucial step toward ensuring that transmission expansion is done thoughtfully and with respect for Maryland's communities, farmland, and historical landscapes.

SB 853 places necessary restrictions on the construction of new overhead transmission lines, ensuring that developers and utilities fully explore existing rights-of-way before creating new transmission corridors. This bill is a direct response to projects like the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP), an unnecessary and intrusive high-voltage transmission proposal that threatens Maryland's landowners, rural communities, and property values.

Under current regulations, transmission developers have broad authority to carve up landscapes, seize private land through eminent domain, and push forward projects without fully exploring alternative solutions. SB 853 would prohibit the Public Service Commission (PSC) from approving new overhead transmission lines unless the applicant proves that existing rights-of-way are insufficient. Additionally, if new overhead lines are truly necessary, they must be located within 0.25 miles of an existing transmission corridor, preventing the reckless expansion of transmission infrastructure into untouched and protected lands.

The MPRP exemplifies the worst of unchecked transmission expansion. This project would take private land from homeowners and farmers, forcing them to surrender property for corporate gain. It would cut through farmland and historic preservation areas, disrupting Maryland's agricultural economy and cultural heritage. Homeowners in affected areas would see their property values decline as massive high-voltage lines loom over their communities, damaging local economies and reducing funding for already strained public schools that rely on property tax revenue. SB 853 provides a critical safeguard against these harms by ensuring that transmission expansion prioritizes the use of existing corridors rather than unnecessarily encroaching on Maryland's rural and residential areas.

Beyond the financial and legal implications, the MPRP poses a significant human cost. For families in the affected areas, this project has created uncertainty and anxiety about their futures. Homeowners who have worked their entire lives to build stability now face the

prospect of losing their land or watching their property values plummet. Farmers whose land has been in their families for generations fear that transmission lines will render their fields unusable, affecting not just their businesses but their way of life. The stress of fighting against corporate overreach has taken a toll on families, forcing them to dedicate time, energy, and resources to a battle they should never have had to fight in the first place. It is unacceptable that residents must live under the constant threat of displacement and economic instability for a project that has not even been proven necessary. SB 853 provides much-needed relief by ensuring that unnecessary projects like the MPRP face heightened scrutiny before they can move forward.

The necessity of this bill is further emphasized by the failure of transmission developers to consider modern alternatives. Delegate Nino Mangione questioned PSEG representatives about whether they had explored upgrading existing infrastructure rather than building new transmission lines, and their response was revealing: they had not considered it at all. Only after public outcry did they rush to justify their initial plan. This demonstrates a deeply flawed planning process, one in which transmission expansion is prioritized over common-sense upgrades. SB 853 ensures that utilities and developers must first optimize and upgrade existing infrastructure before proposing disruptive new projects.

SB 853 is not about halting progress; it is about fostering responsible and intelligent energy infrastructure development. By encouraging grid-enhancing technologies, reconductoring, and distributed energy solutions, this bill supports a modernized grid without unnecessary land seizures. It reinforces local authority by giving counties and municipalities greater oversight in permitting processes, ensuring that communities have a voice in decisions that directly impact their land and livelihoods.

Maryland must take a leadership role in energy planning that prioritizes efficiency, sustainability, and respect for its communities. SB 853 is a step in that direction. It holds utilities accountable, prevents reckless transmission expansion, and protects landowners from unnecessary and unjustified disruptions.

I urge the committee to support SB 853 and help ensure that Maryland's energy infrastructure grows responsibly, with a focus on modernization, efficiency, and community protection.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bryan Price

21221 York Road

Parkton, MD 21120
Bryan.s.price@gmail.com
410.302.8074

SB0853_Public_Service_Commission_Transmission_Line

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR SB0853
Public Service Commission - Transmission Line Siting - Limitations

Bill Sponsor: Senator Lewis-Young

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB0853 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members respect the need of the utilities in the state to build more transmission lines to service a growing data center expansion in the state. We already have a network of transmission lines across the state, but the utilities are trying to put new lines in places that have never had transmission lines before, which has alarmed the residents in the areas where they look to expand their networks.

This bill injects some common-sense into this process. It prohibits the Public Service from approving construction of a new overhead transmission line outside of an existing transmission line right of way unless there is adequate evidence that the existing transmission line rights of way are not sufficient for the new transmission line.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

SB 853.pdf

Uploaded by: CHERYL EBAUGH

Position: FAV

Please pass SB 853 to protect Maryland landowners and ensure that our elected officials and leaders of our beautiful state of Maryland are doing their due diligence to promote responsible transmission development and ensure fair energy policies.

Thank you,

Cheryl Ebaugh

SB0853-EEE_MACo_SUP.pdf

Uploaded by: Dominic Butchko

Position: FAV



Senate Bill 853

Public Service Commission - Transmission Line Siting - Limitations

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee

Date: March 6, 2025

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 853. This bill limits the placement of new transmission lines to within 0.25 miles of existing transmission lines.

The 2025 Maryland General Assembly is facing a historic number of complex generational challenges. One of the loudest issues to arise has been Maryland's opposition to the Piedmont Reliability Project. The Project, which crosses Baltimore, Carroll, and Frederick Counties, effectively creates an "extension cord" across some of our state's prime agricultural lands, providing Pennsylvania-generated energy to Virginia-based data centers, with little direct benefit to Marylanders. As the General Assembly debates how to address this and other energy challenges, one of the biggest underlying issues will be how to prioritize now competing state priorities (i.e., energy demands and environmental goals).

Since the 1960s, counties and the State have invested hundreds of millions of dollars into conservation, and to date, counties have actively limited development in these preserved areas. The intent of SB 853 is to respond to the Piedmont Project by limiting new transmission lines to within 0.25 miles of existing lines. These are areas where the environmental, economic, and other various impacts have already been accounted for, and where barriers for new development should be relatively low. As transmission infrastructure upgrades may uniquely be accomplished by upgrading existing lines or using existing land, counties join the sponsor in wanting to protect the finite number of conserved lands.

This is commonsense legislation which seeks to address conflicts between Maryland's growing demand for energy and billions invested into other pro-climate policies to date. For this reason, MACo urges the Committee to give SB 853 a **FAVORABLE** report.

Testimony to General Assembly James Belt 03042025.

Uploaded by: James Belt

Position: FAV

March 4, 2025

James H. Belt, III

2626 Stone Road

Westminster, MD 21158

Maryland General Assembly

RE: Support of bills advocating for a better approach to energy development

Dear Members of the Maryland General Assembly:

My name is James Belt. As a resident of Carroll County and a proud Maryland business owner, I am writing to ask you to vote favorably for bills advocating a better approach to energy development.

As someone who had the potential to be impacted by the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project, I was disturbed and disappointed by the existing process for project consideration and protections for landowners. It became apparent that the current process did not require enough investigation into potential alternatives to the proposed transmission lines. Additionally, the public appeared to be brought into the process at later stages, making it harder for citizens impacted by the project to voice their concerns. It appears that there may be many viable alternatives to the proposed project. I also believe there has not been enough consideration to the impact of closing existing power plants before the State of Maryland has a viable alternative to generate the power being lost.

With that in mind, I would strongly encourage you to vote for the proposed bills that improve the process, provide more protection for Maryland citizens, and advocate for investigation into potentially better and more economic alternatives to new transmission lines.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Best,

James Belt

(410)-236-3574

Jessica Malatt.pdf

Uploaded by: Jessica Malatt

Position: FAV

Jessica Malatt

7709 Hobbs Court

Mount Airy, MD 21771

jessicamalatt@gmail.com

240-529-2348

3/4/2025

Testimony in Support of Senate Bills 483, 853, 947, 950, 951, 952, 953, 955 and House Bills 631, 1079, 1337, 1362, 1396

To:

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Chair: Senator Brian J. Feldman – brian.feldman@senate.state.md.us

Vice Chair: Senator Cheryl C. Kagan – cheryl.kagan@senate.state.md.us

House Economic Matters Committee

Chair: Delegate C.T. Wilson – ct.wilson@house.state.md.us

Vice Chair: Delegate Brian M. Crosby – brian.crosby@house.state.md.us

From: Jessica Malatt

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee & the House Economic Matters Committee,

My name is Jessica Malatt, and I am a resident of Mount Airy, Maryland. I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bills 483, 853, 947, 950, 951, 952, 953, 955 and House Bills 631, 1079, 1337, 1362, 1396, which are essential in protecting homeowners, families, and our environment from unnecessary and harmful infrastructure projects like the Maryland Public Service Commission's (PSC) MPRP transmission line proposal.

As a homeowner in a rural community directly impacted by this project, my greatest concern is the well-being of my family. My husband and I chose to build our home in this peaceful, natural environment to raise our children away from urban congestion, noise, and industrial encroachment. The proposed transmission lines would disrupt this way of life, forcing us to live beneath towering electrical structures and exposing our children to potential health risks from

electromagnetic fields. This is not what we envisioned when we made a lifelong investment in this property.

Beyond the direct impact on my home, the MPRP transmission project threatens the surrounding forested land, including a neighboring property that shares the same woodland area. This forest serves as a natural buffer, providing privacy, clean air, and an essential habitat for wildlife. If this project proceeds unchecked, it will irreversibly damage the environment, destroy mature trees, and alter the rural character of our community.

The bills I support ensure that homeowners like myself are not forced to accept industrial-scale projects in our backyards without thorough evaluation of alternative solutions.

- Senate Bill 483 requires the Public Service Commission to consider less invasive options before approving new transmission lines, protecting sensitive environmental and residential areas.
- House Bill 631 reinforces property rights by preventing the state from taking land under perpetual agricultural or conservation easements.
- Senate Bill 953 proposes the creation of a task force to develop a realistic electricity plan for Maryland, ensuring that future infrastructure meets energy demands responsibly without sacrificing homeowner rights.

These measures provide necessary oversight and accountability to prevent projects like MPRP from overriding the interests of Maryland's homeowners and environment.

While some may argue that expanding the power grid is necessary for future energy demands, we must balance progress with responsible development. Placing transmission lines in residential and environmentally sensitive areas is not the only option—alternative solutions such as underground lines or existing right-of-ways should be prioritized.

These bills advocate for that balance, ensuring that Maryland's infrastructure needs do not come at the cost of:

- Families' health
- Property values
- Environmental conservation

Call to Action

I respectfully urge you to support Senate Bills 483, 853, 947, 950, 951, 952, 953, 955 and House Bills 631, 1079, 1337, 1362, 1396, and to advocate for their passage to protect Maryland's homeowners, preserve our forests, and prevent unnecessary and harmful infrastructure development.

Closing and Thank You

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to contact me at jessicamalatt@gmail.com or 240-529-2348. I appreciate your dedication to serving our community and look forward to seeing your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Jessica Malatt

MPRP BILLS SUPPORT.pdf

Uploaded by: Julie Holly

Position: FAV

I am writing in support of the following bills: SB483, SB853, SB947, SB950, SB951, SB952, SB953, SB955, HB631, HB1079, HB1337, HB1362, and HB1396.

Each of these bills is essential to ensuring that any entity seeking to construct energy transmission or generating facilities is held accountable for the full impact of its actions. For too long, citizens have shouldered the financial and personal costs of these projects—whether through harm to their health, businesses, properties, incomes, or overall quality of life. Meanwhile, corporations reap the benefits without sufficient regard for the communities they affect.

The approval of the MPRP project as currently proposed would send a troubling message to Maryland residents about where their interests rank in the eyes of their representatives. Maryland thrives when its communities thrive, and maintaining a strong, engaged population depends on policies that protect the well-being and economic stability of those who call this state home. Enacting stricter regulations to ensure corporate responsibility would reinforce that Maryland legislators are committed to safeguarding their constituents and the long-term prosperity of the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Julie Holly, District 4

SB853.pdf

Uploaded by: Lisa Orens

Position: FAV

I support SB 853 because:

New overhead construction of new overhead transmission lines MUST be prohibited unless existing Rights-of-Way are proven insufficient through thorough study. Construction of new overhead transmission lines will require acquisition of rights-of-way which will involve using eminent domain to gain those ROWs. This will cause devastating impacts on landowners by greatly diminishing property values, on farmers by permanently destroying valuable, productive farmland, and on forests and wetlands, by destroying ecosystems that will be impossible to replace or rebuild.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Orens

Owner, Bluebird Hall Farm

SB0853 - FAVORABLE testimony - MPatton.pdf

Uploaded by: Mary Patton

Position: FAV

Mary Patton
5772 Catoctin Vista Dr
Mount Airy, MD
walton_m@yahoo.com
March 4, 2025

**Re: Testimony in Support of SB0853 – Public Service Commission – Transmission Line Siting -
Limitations**

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

My name is Mary Patton and I am a resident of Mount Airy, MD. I am writing to express FAVORABLE support for SB0853. I am a community advocate, parent, and resident that has the potential to be impacted by the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project. Bills such as SB0853 will help protect communities by prohibiting new overhead transmission lines unless an applicant proves that existing rights-of-way are insufficient.

Transmission lines that do not prioritize existing rights-of-way or consider alternative technologies dangerously damage farmland, lower property values, and ignore better alternatives. This bill will prioritize the use of existing rights-of-way rather than allowing reckless expansion of transmission infrastructure into protected lands. This bill is not about limiting progress, rather, it strives to achieve smarter progress by using more responsible methods that optimize existing transmission lines, consider grid-enhancing technologies or distributed energy generation.

I ask you to support this bill and find a smarter path forward for Maryland by prioritizing a smarter approach to energy solutions that respect communities, farms and conservation land rather than treating them as disposable in the pursuit of energy expansion.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Patton", with a stylized, cursive script.

Mary Patton

please support sb 853.pdf

Uploaded by: Matthew Moran

Position: FAV

March 4, 2025

Dear Honorable Senators and Delegates,

Please restrict the construction of new transmission lines. We need to protect farms and natural spaces throughout Maryland.

Please support SB 853

Thank you very much,

Matt Moran

2931 Monocacy Bottom Rd.
Adamstown, MD 21710
monocacybottommatt@gmail.com

Testimony in support of SB0853 - Public Service Co

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB0853_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
03/06/2025

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#/0853 – FAVORABLE

Public Service Commission - Transmission Line Siting - Limitations

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0853, Public Service Commission - Transmission Line Siting - Limitations

This bill seeks to ensure that the construction of new electric transmission lines siting are considered only when the existing right-of-ways are judged as inadequate for that expansion. It seeks to mitigate the environmental and other costs associated with the creation of a new path for transmission lines.

This bill accomplishes this goal by prohibiting the Public Service Commission from authorizing, and a person from undertaking, the construction of an overhead transmission line outside of an existing transmission line right-of-way. This prohibition is in effect unless the applicant adequately demonstrates to the Commission that existing transmission line rights-of-way are not sufficient for the proposed overhead transmission line.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0853.

SB 0853 FAV FCG JOINT LS25 FINAL.pdf

Uploaded by: Victoria Venable

Position: FAV



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

SB 0853 - Public Service Commission - Transmission Line Siting - Limitations

DATE: March 6, 2025
COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
POSITION: Favorable

On behalf of the Frederick County community, we urge the committee to give **SB 0853 - Public Service Commission - Transmission Line Siting - Limitations** a favorable report.

Frederick County is one of the three Maryland counties that is directly impacted by the proposed Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project ("MPRP"). Our community has been clear that we oppose the project and are concerned about its impact on residents, natural and historic resources, and our economy and quality of life.

The Public Service Commission ("PSC") is responsible for reviewing project applications and authorizing construction of transmission line projects in the State of Maryland. While the PSC actively considers a variety of factors in these decisions, they are not tasked with requiring a project to use existing transmission rights-of-ways ("ROW"). SB 853 would prohibit the PSC from authorizing a transmission line project that does not use existing ROWs, unless it is proven that the existing ROWs are not sufficient for the proposed transmission line.

The PSC should be utilizing all available options to minimize the impact of transmission line construction on our residents, communities, and environment. State of Maryland and Frederick County Government has invested significant resources towards the preservation of agricultural and conservation areas and the proposed MPRP threatens to undermine those investments and directly harm our constituents in the process. SB 853 would require projects such as MPRP to minimize their impact by utilizing existing ROWs when possible. This requirement would also help mitigate the impact to residents by reducing how many properties are impacted.

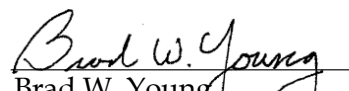
The use of existing rights-of-way for transmission line projects could solve a variety of concerns that counties and residents currently hold in regard to proposed projects like MPRP.


Thank you for your consideration of SB 853 and we urge a favorable report.

Respectfully,


Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive



Kavonté Duckett
County Council Vice President


Brad W. Young
County Council President

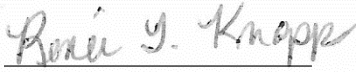

Mason Carter
County Council Member



Jerry Donald
County Council Member



M.C. Keegan-Ayer
County Council Member



Renee Knapp
County Council Member



Steve McKay
County Council Member

SB853.pdf

Uploaded by: Whitney Miller

Position: FAV

Hello,

There is no denying that energy demands are changing, and we must rise to the occasion. However, we must be responsible with how we do so. We cannot afford to have companies that are unwilling to or unable to work with already existing companies to ensure that the least detrimental methods are used for transmission projects. New transmission projects must be held to the highest standards, as we cannot lose our state to lines that destroy our natural resources, preserved lands, and farmland that contributes to our economy. Please support Senate Bill 853.

Thank you,

Whitney Miller
Maryland Resident

Dominion Plans for Long-Term Virginia Data Center

Uploaded by: Elizabeth Law

Position: FWA



POWER

Dominion Plans for Long-Term Virginia Data Center Power Demand, Connects with PJM on Transmission Lines

Dominion Energy Virginia this month has released a comprehensive, long-term regional plan to meet growing power demand, and jointly proposed several new large transmission projects with First Energy and American Electric Power (AEP) to strengthen electric reliability across the 13-state PJM region over the next decade.

[Matt Vincent](#)

On Oct. 15, [Dominion Energy Virginia](#) released a comprehensive, long-term regional plan to meet growing power demand, much of it driven by data centers, with reliable, affordable and increasingly clean electricity.

In its 2024 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), as filed on Oct. 15 with the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC) and the North Carolina Utilities Commission (NCUC), Dominion laid out multiple portfolio options to meet rising power demand through "significant investments in new power generation from every source."

Dominion Energy said such means will include expansion and modernization of the power grid, deployment of energy storage technologies, and newly implemented energy efficiency programs to maintain grid reliability while meeting the unprecedented growth in power demand.

The utility primarily provides regulated electricity service to 3.6 million homes and businesses in Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, and regulated natural gas service to 400,000 customers in South Carolina.

"We are experiencing the largest growth in power demand since the years following World War II," observed Ed Baine, President of Dominion Energy Virginia. "No single energy source, grid solution or energy efficiency program will reliably serve the growing needs of our customers. We need an 'all-of-the-above' approach, and we are developing innovative solutions to ensure we deliver for our customers."

Dominion noted that the IRP is not a request to build any specific project, but rather a long-term planning document based on a snapshot in time of current technology, market information and load projections. Nearly 80% of the plan's incremental power generation over the next 15 years is carbon-free, including more solar and offshore wind generation, more energy storage, and more nuclear resources.

"I am proud of the affordability we deliver, with residential rates 14% below the national average, and as shown in the plan we intend to continue that focus," added Dominion's Baine. "Our comprehensive plan ensures we can always deliver reliable, affordable and increasingly clean energy – day or night, rain or shine, winter or summer."

Dominion Energy Virginia says the new IRP demonstrates the company's commitment to reliable, affordable and increasingly clean electricity, with highlights including:

- ~3,400 megawatts (MW) of new offshore wind generation, in addition to the 2,600 MW Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind (CVOW) project, currently under development off the coast of Virginia Beach. The utility notes that CVOW is the largest offshore wind project under development in the U.S. "and remains on-time and on-budget."
- ~12,000 MW of new solar energy generation, an increase of more than 150% to the 4,750 MW of solar energy the company currently has in operation or under development.
- ~4,500 MW of new battery storage capabilities.
- Small modular nuclear reactors [beginning in the mid-2030s](#).

Meanwhile, about 20% of the plan's incremental power generation will come from natural gas, Dominion Energy Virginia characterizes as "a critically important source

of reliable backup power to ensure the lights stay on" when the utility's expanding wind and solar fleet are not producing electricity.

The IRP is based on a forecast developed by [PJM](#), a regional transmission organization (RTO) which coordinates the movement of wholesale electricity in all or parts of 13 states and the District of Columbia, and projects that power demand will continue growing at unprecedented levels in the coming decades.

PJM Joint Transmission Project Pact Binds Dominion, AEP, First Energy

In a related move also announced this month, Dominion Energy jointly proposed several new large transmission projects with First Energy and [American Electric Power \(AEP\)](#) to strengthen electric reliability across the 13-state PJM region over the next decade. These projects will also support further integration of the significant renewables included in the IRP.

Dominion, AEP and FirstEnergy have entered into a joint planning agreement to propose several new regional electric transmission projects across multiple states within the PJM footprint. The initiative aims serve the region's growing power demand through the RTO's competitive planning process, while promoting regional grid reliability.

The companies jointly proposed the new transmission projects through PJM's Regional Transmission Expansion Plan (RTEP) Open Window process in September. PJM is the regional transmission organization that coordinates the transportation of wholesale electricity across the 13-state region that includes Virginia. The proposed projects include several new 765-kV, 500-kV and 345-kV transmission lines in Virginia, Ohio and West Virginia.

As announced on Oct. 7, the partners note the innovative collaboration "comes at a time when efficient and cost-effective regional transmission development is essential and encouraged" by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the independent federal agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity.

PJM emphasizes that power demand in its region is growing at an unprecedented pace due to rapid expansion of such energy-intensive industries such as data centers,

as well as the electrification of transportation and heating, and increased manufacturing onshoring. At the same time, PJM notes the region's power generation mix is changing as legacy generation is retired and more renewables are added to the grid.

Headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, AEP owns and operates more than 40,000 miles of transmission lines, comprising the nation's largest electric transmission system, with more than 225,000 miles of distribution lines delivering power to 5.6 million customers in 11 states. AEP also is one of the nation's largest electricity producers with approximately 29,000 megawatts of diverse generating capacity. AEP notes is investing \$43 billion over the next five years to make the electric grid cleaner and more reliable. AEP participates in the competitive transmission space through Transource, a jointly owned transmission company with Evergy, headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri.

"AEP operates the largest transmission network in the nation and has more experience building 765 kV infrastructure than any other company in the U.S.," contends Bob Bradish, senior vice president, Regulated Infrastructure Investment Planning for AEP. "The solutions we have proposed to address the rapidly evolving energy demand we are seeing across the region will enable us to continue providing reliable service and drive economic growth."

For its part, the electric distribution companies of FirstEnergy Corp. (NYSE: FE) form one of the nation's largest investor-owned electric systems, serving more than six million customers in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia, Maryland and New York. The company's transmission subsidiaries operate approximately 24,000 miles of transmission lines that connect the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic regions.

"Energy-intensive industries, electrification and the energy transition all rely on a robust power grid," said Mark Mroczynski, President, FirstEnergy Transmission. "By drawing upon the combined experience of three leading transmission developers, we can take the proactive steps needed to build new infrastructure that will ensure our communities have the power they need for sustained health and economic growth in the future."

Meanwhile, power demand within Dominion Energy's delivery zone is forecasted to grow 5.5% annually for the next decade, and to double by 2039. At the same time, the company is also ramping investments to expand the transmission grid. During the first half of 2024, Dominion reports it completed 123 new transmission projects, including nearly 90 miles of new and rebuilt transmission lines and 13 new substations.

"This dynamic environment requires more regional collaboration to develop large-scale 'backbone' transmission infrastructure that spans across the areas served by our three companies," said Dominion's President Baine. "By leveraging the expertise and resources of three industry leaders whose transmission zones border one another, we're better able to develop superior and more cost-effective solutions required to effectively resolve reliability issues across the PJM region. These projects are more comprehensive and will be more effective than what each of our companies would be able to develop individually."

The projects under the joint plan remain in the early stages of development. If selected by PJM, the companies would then undertake an extensive, multi-year process to select routes, perform environmental studies, engage with communities, obtain state and local permitting and build the projects.

In addition to the joint proposals, each of the three companies have also submitted individual proposals for other transmission projects consistent with how each company has participated in past PJM open windows.

Virginia Hyperscaler Energy Demand Raises Call for Data Center Reforms

Underscoring the company's commitment to providing increasingly clean energy, in a separate filing this month with Virginia's State Corporation Commission (SCC), Dominion Energy proposed more than 1,000 MW of new solar projects in that state, which is of course the world's data center capital.

If the proposed projects are approved, the company's solar fleet in operation or under development – which is currently the second largest among utilities in the U.S. – will

surpass 5,750 MW in Virginia (enough to power more than 1.4 million homes at peak output).

Meanwhile, as the state's utility regulator, the Virginia SCC has scheduled a technical conference for Dec. 16 to discuss current and future challenges presented by the growth of hyperscale data centers.

"Large power users such as data centers could bring an 'unprecedented' amount of new load for electric utilities, creating complications and risks the utilities have not previously encountered," the SCC said in a press release.

The utility commission added that the technical conference is "intended to identify potential frameworks that facilitate service; address risks and issues of the increased usage; are just and reasonable to current and future customers; and meet current Virginia statutes."

The conference will also explore issues associated with on-site power at data center campuses.

The SCC noted three questions in particular that it hopes for the event to address. To wit:

- Should the Commission establish a tariff framework and terms of service for these large-scale customers?
- Should certain transmission costs be directly assigned to a new large-use customer class
- Should certain generation costs be directly assigned to a new large-use customer class?

While not mentioned, a matter certainly of interest to the data center community is whether some form of cost-sharing might improve timeline predictability for power delivery.

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Testimony- SB 853-Public Utilities-Xmission Siting

Uploaded by: Elizabeth Law

Position: FWA

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill SB 853
**Public Utilities – Transmission Siting and Electricity Demand
- Limitations and Reporting Requirements**

COMMITTEE: Education, Energy and Environment

HEARING DATE: March 6, 2025

POSITION: Favorable with Amendments

My name is Elizabeth Law. I am a professional power engineer. I was a transmission planner for Con Edison of NY and worked for 10 years for FERC in the Office of Electric Reliability.

Power demand from hungry hyperscale data centers spurred PJM to award PSEG the contract to build the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP) transmission line. Federal Law allows PSEG to receive a guaranteed right of return on transmission lines built in “Greenfields”. However, when a utility reconductors a transmission line to carry more power it is considered “maintenance”. Naturally, the bottom line of any utility points to building through farms and protected land rather than evaluate the use of existing right of ways.

SB 853 offers a solution to Maryland residents suffering the unintended consequences from these haphazard situations. The bill requires protection and innovation, including:

- Utilities shall use existing right of ways for high voltage transmission lines or provide substantive evidence that this is not possible. Transmission lines in greenfields must be 0.25 miles from an existing right of way.
- Utilities shall provide a yearly report of their power demand forecast, plans to supply the demand, actions to interconnect with renewable generation owners at the distribution level

and grid enhancements like dynamic scheduling to increase efficiency. In other states this is known as an integrated resource plan (IRP)

- The Public Service Commission (PSC) is authorized to provide a yearly report to the General Assembly of the statewide condition of our power supply and recommend implementation in keeping with our existing legislation to reduce greenhouse gasses, promote environmental justice, and ensure energy efficiency and reliability.

As a transmission planner, accurate information was crucial to performing my job. Elected officials are no different. Other states require utilities to provide reports – often called Integrated Resource Plans. The utilities have this data available. It needs to be shared with the PSC and elected officials so that Maryland can plan not just react.

PJM does not consider socio-economic impacts when it awards contracts. The information from the utilities' interconnected resource plans will enable Maryland's officials to ask PJM the important questions and recommend actions that will be best for Maryland. We can work beyond the siloed constraints and dictates of PJM by enhancing our distribution system. This will require input from and closer involvement with state utilities.

PSC involvement with the utilities could accelerate initiatives. These include:

- Demand response - in this program utilities contract with customers to reduce power consumption during high load periods. Next Era in Florida was able to cancel plans for nuclear power plants, substations and transmission lines –saving ratepayers those increases.
- Utility scale batteries store power to use at peak times. This reduces or eliminates the need to build expensive and polluting gas generators. This technology is available now.

- Integration of Tier 1 renewable resource projects need to be accelerated. These projects have been slow to reach their potential in Maryland. Greater communication between the PSC and utilities could address implementation roadblocks. Sometimes a crisis creates opportunities. Let's make use of the current power crisis.

I ask for a Favorable Report with Amendments.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Law, P.E. (retired)

FAV_SB0853_StopMPRPInc.pdf

Uploaded by: Joanne Frederick

Position: FWA



WRITTEN TESTIMONY

BILL NO.: Senate Bill 853 – Public Service Commission - Transmission Line Siting - Limitations

COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

HEARING DATE: March 6, 2025

SPONSORS: Senators Lewis Young, Brooks, and Hettleman

POSITION: Favorable with Amendments

I submit this testimony on behalf of Stop MPRP, Inc. in strong support of Senate Bill 853 (SB0853), with the adoption of two critical amendments. This bill is essential to protect Maryland's land, communities, and energy future by ensuring greater oversight, transparency, and strategic planning in transmission development while limiting unnecessary and disruptive overhead transmission line construction.

PJM's Award of the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP) and the Importance of SB0853

PJM Interconnection awarded the **Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP)** before the implementation of **FERC Order 1920**, limiting Maryland's ability to participate in the planning and oversight of this massive infrastructure project. Had **FERC Order 1920** been in place, Maryland would have had **more insight, influence, and control over the project's necessity, siting, and alternative considerations**.

- **FERC Order 1920** enhances **state involvement in long-term transmission planning**, ensuring that states like Maryland can assess the full impact of projects like MPRP **before they are approved**.
- **PJM's approval of MPRP under outdated regulatory frameworks** denied Maryland the ability to require alternative solutions such as grid-enhancing technologies, reconductoring, and undergrounding transmission lines.
- **Without proactive legislation like SB0853**, Maryland remains vulnerable to transmission projects that prioritize corporate expansion over the state's environmental, economic, and land use priorities.



Key Protections Under SB0853

1. Restricts Unnecessary Overhead Transmission Lines

- The bill **prohibits the construction of new overhead transmission lines unless utilities prove that existing rights-of-way are insufficient.**
- If new corridors are needed, they **must be sited within 0.25 miles of an existing transmission line**, reducing environmental and property impacts.

2. Reinforces Local and State Authority

- SB0853 **preserves local authority over permitting**, ensuring communities retain control over projects affecting their land and environment.
- It **prevents local governments from being forced to accept transmission line approvals** without due consideration.

3. Increases Transparency and Accountability (*Strengthened by the Amendments*)

- **Amendment 1:** Adds **electricity demand reporting requirements**, mandating utilities to submit annual reports to the Public Service Commission (PSC) on:
 - Forecasted electricity demand and expected geographic areas of increased load.
 - Available resources to meet demand, including demand response and distributed energy.
 - Anticipated impacts of federal and state regulations.
 - A list of projects requiring PJM Interconnection approval.
- **Amendment 2:** Requires the **PSC to compile and include this data in its annual reports to the General Assembly** to ensure **greater transparency, accountability, and informed decision-making** in Maryland's energy planning.

4. Aligns Maryland's Transmission Planning with FERC Order 1920

- FERC Order 1920 ensures that **states play a central role in regional transmission planning**, but Maryland must **pass SB0853 to protect against projects like MPRP that were rushed through under outdated policies.**
- This bill ensures **future transmission development aligns with Maryland's priorities** rather than defaulting to out-of-state decision-making by PJM and transmission developers.



The Urgency to Act: Stopping the MPRP

The **MPRP threatens private property, devalues properties, and degrades Maryland's rural and agricultural landscapes**. According to project studies, MPRP's proposed **right-of-way (ROW) would impact:**

- 245.8 acres of conservation easements, including 224.6 acres protected under MALPF.
- 51.1 acres of wetlands, including 10.1 acres of forested wetlands.
- 394.2 acres of forested lands.
- 101 stream and waterbody crossings.
- 1,801.7 acres of conserved land within 500 feet of the ROW.

The **destruction of conservation lands, forests, and wetlands for an unnecessary transmission project is unacceptable**. The **PSC must be required to prioritize state interests over PJM's rushed planning decisions**.

Passing SB0853, with the amendments, is crucial to:

- Protect Maryland's authority over transmission siting.
- Ensure responsible energy planning that prioritizes existing infrastructure and alternatives.
- Stop projects like the MPRP from advancing without full state oversight.
- Encourage distributed energy solutions that reduce the need for new transmission lines.

Conclusion

By **limiting unnecessary transmission expansion, reinforcing local and state oversight, and aligning Maryland's regulatory framework with FERC Order 1920, SB0853 empowers Marylanders to control their energy future**.

I urge the committee to issue a **favorable report with the two amendments**. Thank you for your time and consideration.



Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Frederick

President

Stop MPRP, Inc.

joanne.frederick@stopmprp.org

443.789.1382

Amendment to SB0853.pdf

Uploaded by: Senator Karen Lewis Young

Position: FWA



SB0853/173825/1

AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

04 FEB 25
15:50:26

BY: Senator Lewis Young
(To be offered in the Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 853
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 2, strike “**Public Service Commission –**” and substitute “**Public Utilities –**”; in the same line, after “**Siting**” insert “**and Electricity Demand**”; in the same line, after “**Limitations**” insert “**and Reporting Requirements**”; in line 5, after “circumstances,” insert “requiring each electric company to submit a certain report on electricity demand to the Commission each year;”; in the same line, after “lines” insert “and electricity demand”; in line 13, after “7–207(h)” insert “and 7–802.1”; and in line 18, after “7–207(h)” insert “and 7–802”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, after line 34 insert:

“7–802.

(A) On or before December 1, 2024, and each December 1 thereafter, the Commission shall submit a report, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly with information regarding the current status of projects designed to promote the goals identified in this section, including information on planning processes and implementation that promote, as specific goals, the following:

(1) measures to decrease greenhouse gas emissions incident to electric distribution, including high levels of distributed energy resources and electric vehicles;

(2) giving priority to vulnerable communities in the development of distributed energy resources and electric vehicle infrastructure;

- (3) energy efficiency;
- (4) meeting anticipated increases in load;
- (5) incorporation of energy storage technology as appropriate and prudent to:
 - (i) support efficiency and reliability of the electric system; and
 - (ii) provide additional capacity to accommodate increased distributed renewable electricity generation in connection with electric transmission and distribution system modernization;
- (6) efficient management of load variability;
- (7) electric system resiliency and reliability;
- (8) bidirectional power flows;
- (9) demand response and other nonwire and noncapital alternatives;
- (10) increased use of distributed energy resources, including electric vehicles;
- (11) transparent stakeholder participation in ongoing electric system planning processes; and
- (12) any other issues the Commission considers appropriate.

(B) BEGINNING DECEMBER 1, 2025, THE COMMISSION SHALL INCLUDE THE INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE ELECTRIC COMPANY REPORTS

SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION UNDER § 7-802.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE IN THE REPORT REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.

7-802.1.

ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2025, AND EACH OCTOBER 1 THEREAFTER, EACH ELECTRIC COMPANY SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE COMMISSION ON HOW THE ELECTRIC COMPANY IS ADDRESSING GROWING ELECTRICITY DEMAND AND PROJECTS RELATED TO MEETING THAT DEMAND, INCLUDING:

- (1) THE ELECTRIC COMPANY'S FORECASTED LOAD GROWTH;
- (2) THE ELECTRIC COMPANY'S ASSESSMENT OF WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO THE ELECTRIC COMPANY TO MEET THE FORECASTED LOAD;
- (3) THE AREAS FROM WHICH THE ELECTRIC COMPANY ANTICIPATES THE EXPECTED INCREASED DEMAND TO COME, INCLUDING THE AMOUNT OF INCREASED DEMAND EXPECTED IN THOSE AREAS;
- (4) THE ELECTRIC COMPANY'S PLANS TO MEET GROWING ELECTRICITY DEMAND;
- (5) ANTICIPATED IMPACTS OF FEDERAL AND STATE REGULATIONS ON ELECTRICITY DEMAND AND FORECASTED LOAD;
- (6) THE ELECTRIC COMPANY'S USE OF DEMAND RESPONSE PRACTICES;

(Over)

(7) A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION OF ANY INITIATIVES THE ELECTRIC COMPANY IS TAKING TO CONNECT TIER 1 RENEWABLE SOURCES AT THE DISTRIBUTION LEVEL TO REDUCE STRESS ON THE ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM; AND

(8) A LIST OF PROJECTS THE ELECTRIC COMPANY IS WORKING ON THAT REQUIRE APPROVAL BY PJM INTERCONNECTION, LLC.”.

SB0853 Transmission Line Siting Written Testimony

Uploaded by: Senator Karen Lewis Young

Position: FWA

KAREN LEWIS YOUNG
Legislative District 3
Frederick County

Budget and Taxation Committee



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Honorable Brian Feldman
Honorable Cheryl Kagan
Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

March 6th, 2025

SB0853 Public Service Commission - Transmission Line Siting - Limitations

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and esteemed members of this committee,

The growth of high tech, high power industries threatens our landscape with the proliferation of transmission lines needed to supply the electricity these facilities demand. Each line will require the expropriation of land for a project that may not even serve the needs of Maryland. SB0853 places priorities and guardrails on where transmission lines can be built and creates specific reporting requirements to increase transparency.

Transmission lines will continue to be needed and built. This bill address concerns over eminent domain by compacting the building of transmission lines within existing rights of way. SB0853 prohibits the Public Service Commission from approving new transmission lines unless the applicant can prove the right of way is not sufficient. If the PSC finds the existing right of way is insufficient, then they may approve a new line to be built not more than one-quarter mile from the existing right of way and minimizing the impact the new line will have on the surrounding landscape.

SB0853 also increases transparency by first requiring local electricity distributors to report to the PSC on:

- A) Forecasted load growth and what resources the company has to address it;

- B) Where they expect the growth to be and their plans to meet it;
- C) Anticipated impacts of state and federal regulations;
- D) Their use of demand-response practices to reduce stress at peak times;
- E) A comprehensive evaluation of initiatives to connect Tier 1 Renewable energy generation to reduce stress; and
- F) A list of projects the company is working on that require PJM approval.

This information helps inform a report the PSC must then provide to the General Assembly. In the PSC's report, they must additionally include the status of projects promoting the specific goals of:

- A) Energy efficiency;
- B) Meeting anticipated increases in load;
- C) Incorporation of energy storage technology to support the reliability of the grid;
- D) Grid resiliency and demand-response practices;
- E) Increased use of distributed energy resources; and
- F) Stakeholder participation in ongoing electric system planning

Altogether, this bill will protect Marylanders. First, by limiting the impact transmission lines will have on our communities. Second, it will make vital information available to the General Assembly, our counties, and communities needed for our increasingly electrified future.

I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,



Senator Karen Lewis Young

SB953 UNF PHI 3.6.25.pdf

Uploaded by: Anne Klase

Position: UNF



March 6, 2025

112 West Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Oppose – Senate Bill 953 – Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland

Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco) and Delmarva Power & Light Company (Delmarva Power) oppose **Senate Bill 953 – Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland**. Senate Bill 953 establishes the Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland to study and make recommendations on the state's current and future electricity needs. The bill prohibits the Public Service Commission (Commission) from approving the construction or expansion of transmission lines in the state from July 1, 2025 through May 1, 2026.

While Pepco and Delmarva Power are notionally supportive of a collaborative and comprehensive assessment of the state's electricity needs to determine effective and viable solutions, this bill would create substantial delays to critical infrastructure projects and inadvertently further exacerbate the state's resource adequacy challenges.

The provision of the bill that would prevent the Commission from approving construction or expansion of transmission lines from July 1, 2025 through May 1, 2026 would not only directly affect transmission projects, but could also have a significant indirect impact on future energy and capacity prices, ultimately increasing cost for consumers. Such a requirement would delay or cancel future transmission projects and could prevent utilities from constructing the necessary upgrades required to allow new generators to interconnect to the grid and provide much needed electricity to Maryland customers. Maryland is a net importer of generation with two major power plants set to retire. While the bill purports to limit Maryland's reliance on out-of-state electricity imports to no more than 25%, the real impact would exacerbate the resource adequacy challenges that Maryland is already facing. With fewer energy resources available to meet demand, both energy and capacity prices could rise, resulting in Maryland's need to import even more energy to supply its residents and businesses. This is counterproductive to efforts the state is making to identify long-term solutions to effectively address resource adequacy needs.

For these reasons, Pepco and Delmarva Power respectfully urge an unfavorable report for Senate Bill 953.

Pepco Holdings, the parent company of Pepco, an electric utility serving Washington, D.C., and suburban Maryland; Delmarva Power, an electric and gas utility serving Delaware and portions of the Delmarva Peninsula; and Atlantic City Electric, an electric utility serving southern New Jersey. Anthony and his team are responsible for guiding the company's delivery of reliable and excellent service to more than two million customers in the Mid-Atlantic. Pepco Holdings is a subsidiary of Exelon Corporation, one of the nation's leading energy services companies.

Valencia McClure | Anne Klase | Allyson Black-Woodson | Poetri Deal | 410 980 5347

BGE_EEE_OPP_SB853_Public Service Commission - Tran

Uploaded by: Guy Andes

Position: UNF

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

SB0853 - LOI - Public Service Commission - Transmi

Uploaded by: Landon Fahrig

Position: INFO



Maryland

Energy Administration

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

FROM: MEA

SUBJECT: SB 853 - Public Service Commission - Transmission Line Siting - Limitations

DATE: March 6, 2025

MEA Position: LETTER OF INFORMATION

This bill would prohibit the Public Service Commission (“PSC”) from authorizing the construction of an overhead transmission line outside of an existing transmission line right-of-way unless the applicant adequately demonstrates to the Commission that existing transmission line rights-of-way are not sufficient for the proposed overhead transmission line.

The PSC already considers alternative routes during the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (“CPCN”) process. Under Maryland Code, Public Utilities § 7-207 at (f)(I)(2), for construction related to a new overhead transmission line, the PSC considers the alternative routes that the applicant considered, including the estimated capital and operating costs of each alternative route and a statement of the reason why the alternative route was rejected.

The legislation expands this requirement to require the alternative routes examined to include existing rights-of-way. However, the bill does not qualify the existing transmission rights-of-way. Interpreted broadly, this could mean an applicant would have to show why any existing transmission line route was not selected. According to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, there are more than 2,000 miles of transmission lines operating in Maryland. An extensive review could exhaust state resources without yielding meaningful alternative routes.

Further, if the applicant does adequately demonstrate to the Commission that existing transmission rights-of-way are not sufficient for the proposed overhead transmission line, the Commission may authorize the widening of the existing rights-of-way by one quarter-mile. Although this solution is optional, it is premised on the only reason for rejection being insufficient width and not other factors such as residences or businesses adjacent to the existing rights-of-way that may be impacted.

MEA encourages the Committee to consider this testimony before rendering its report. For questions or additional information, please contact Landon Fahrig, Legislative Liaison, directly (landon.fahrig@maryland.gov, 410.931.1537).