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Testimony in Support of HB1550

To: Chair and Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

My name is Bill Swartz. I have been a resident of Carroll County, MD for the past nine years. I am writing to support HB1550 which is making much needed corrections to the law concerning our states' rights of eminent domain. I am a Carroll County resident who would be directly impacted by the now infamous MPRP. That disastrous proposal, to construct a 70 mile long "extension cord" across three Maryland counties, is substantially enabled by the current Maryland eminent domain law. The current law gives the State excessive rights to seize property. MPRP is just the first project where outside-Maryland interests are able to legally seize land against the interests of Maryland residents.

The current route of the proposed powerline passes directly behind my home. It would directly impact me by negating the only reasons my wife and I bought our current house nine years ago. These include the environmental protections, preserved and exclusive agricultural use of most of the land in our neighborhood, and the beautiful views that we enjoy of the farmland, along with a dozen other neighbors in our immediate vicinity. Our neighborhood has some of the most scenic views in the entire county. Even people outside our neighborhood come here to enjoy it. Artists from local colleges come here to paint the beautiful pastoral scenes.

I respectfully urge you to pass the bill through committee and to strongly advocate for its passage in the general assembly. This bill is needed to preserve the property rights of Maryland citizens who are currently facing significant threats of encroachment by outside agencies.

Thank you,  
William M. Swartz