



SB201 – SUPPORT

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**TESTIMONY SUPPORTING SB201:
Public Utilities - Transmission Lines - Advanced Transmission
Technologies**

Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
February 17th, 2026

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

I write today on behalf of Ceres to respectfully urge a favorable report from the Committee on SB201 concerning Advanced Transmission Technologies. Ceres works with investors, companies, and financial leaders to promote sustainability solutions. Through our Business for Innovative Climate and Energy Policy Network (BICEP), we mobilize over 80 major employers, including several businesses doing business in Maryland, to advocate for more affordable and sustainable climate and clean energy policies.

Advanced transmission technologies—including grid-enhancing technologies, high-performance conductors, and energy storage used as transmission—represent proven, cost-effective solutions that can dramatically increase the capacity of existing transmission infrastructure without the time delays and expense of building new lines.

From a business perspective, these technologies offer compelling economic advantages:

Faster Deployment and Reduced Regulatory Risk

New transmission line construction typically requires 7-10 years or longer, with significant permitting, siting, and construction challenges that introduce cost overrun risks and schedule delays. Advanced transmission technologies can often be deployed on existing infrastructure in 1-3 years, dramatically accelerating the timeline for relief of transmission congestion and reducing project execution risk. This speed-to-market advantage is critical for businesses planning major clean energy investments in Maryland.

Enhanced Grid Reliability and Resilience

Grid-enhancing technologies provide real-time monitoring and control capabilities that increase system reliability and prevent cascading outages. For businesses, this translates to reduced risk of costly power interruptions. High-performance conductors also perform better under extreme weather conditions, reducing outage risks during heat waves and storms, which are a growing concern for corporate risk managers as climate impacts intensify.

Supporting Maryland's Economic Competitiveness

Maryland is competing with neighboring states to attract new companies to invest in the state. Transmission constraints directly impact the state's ability to compete for these high-value economic development opportunities. SB201 addresses this challenge by:

- Requiring applicants for transmission line certificates to demonstrate they have considered advanced technologies and alternatives. This ensures the Public Service Commission has complete information to evaluate whether proposed projects represent the most cost-effective solution for ratepayers.
- Establishing regular reporting on transmission congestion and potential solutions. This transparency allows businesses and policymakers to understand bottlenecks in the system and plan accordingly, while ensuring transmission owners are actively evaluating cost-effective solutions rather than defaulting to expensive new construction.
- Creating a more comprehensive planning framework that considers the full range of options—from transmission and distribution system modifications to demand response and energy efficiency. This integrated approach ensures Maryland's grid investments deliver maximum value and support the state's clean energy goals without unnecessary expenditure.

Alignment with Industry Best Practices

Leading utilities and grid operators across the country are already deploying advanced transmission technologies. PJM Interconnection has implemented dynamic line ratings on thousands of circuit-miles. Major utilities have announced significant deployments of high-performance conductors and grid-enhancing technologies. These utilities recognize that maximizing existing infrastructure is both economically prudent and essential for meeting growing electricity demand.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has encouraged regional transmission organizations to consider advanced technologies in their planning processes. SB201 brings Maryland's state-level regulatory framework into alignment with this evolving federal and industry consensus around grid modernization.

Enabling the Clean Energy Transition

Companies are increasingly committed to clean energy procurement and decarbonization goals. Transmission capacity is frequently the limiting factor in connecting new clean energy projects to load centers. By accelerating the deployment of technologies that increase transmission capacity quickly and cost-effectively, SB201 directly supports the business community's ability to meet clean energy commitments while controlling costs.

The bill's expansion of the definition of 'qualified generator lead line' to include advanced transmission technologies is particularly important. This ensures that clean energy interconnection projects can leverage the most cost-effective infrastructure solutions, reducing the cost of clean energy for Maryland businesses and residents.

Conclusion

SB201 represents sound policy that balances the need for transmission infrastructure investment with fiscal responsibility to ratepayers. By requiring consideration of advanced transmission technologies and establishing regular reporting on transmission congestion, the bill creates a planning framework that will result in lower costs, faster deployment, and more resilient infrastructure.

The business community and all ratepayers need a transmission system that can accommodate growing electricity demand, facilitate clean energy deployment, and support economic development, all while controlling costs for ratepayers. SB201 advances all of these objectives.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on SB201.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Mauk
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