



WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Written Testimony in Support of SB 584

Energy, Education, and the Environment Committee

Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity and Transmission Lines – Notice to Landowners

Chair and Members of the Committee:

I submit this testimony in strong support of SB 584 based on direct experience.

In July 2024, more than 400 Maryland landowners learned — in some cases with as little as 24 hours' notice — that their property was in the path of a proposed high-voltage transmission line. Families who had farmed their land for generations, homeowners who had invested their life savings, and small businesses rooted in rural communities were blindsided.

While SB 584 applies at the time a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) application is filed, and while even earlier notice would be preferable, this legislation is an essential step forward. It requires utilities and transmission developers to be proactive and direct in their communication — not reactive, not selective, and not dependent on informal channels.

In the case of the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project, the proposed route has continued to evolve. As the line shifts, not every newly affected landowner has been consistently notified. Adjacent property owners — who may experience visual impacts, access limitations, or economic harm — are not always directly informed under current practice.

SB 584 corrects this by:

- Requiring certified mail notice at the time of filing a CPCN application;
- Expanding notice to adjacent and abutting landowners; and
- Ensuring that recipients are clearly informed of their right to intervene in PSC proceedings.

This bill does not stop infrastructure projects. It does not change approval standards. It simply establishes that when private property may be permanently affected, utilities must communicate clearly, early in the formal process, and in a verifiable manner.

Most importantly, SB 584 gives notice requirements real meaning by establishing consequences when they are not followed. Procedural protections are only effective if they are enforceable.



Maryland property owners should not have to rely on rumor, social media, or last-minute public meetings to learn that their land is under consideration for a transmission corridor. Public utilities, which are granted significant authority and, in some cases, the power of eminent domain, should be held to a high standard of transparency and proactive communication.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB 584.

Respectfully submitted,

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