

Maryland State Senate  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 24, 2026

RE: Testimony in Favor of Senate Bill 584 -  
Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity and Transmission Lines – Notice to  
Landowners

Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the committee,

My name is Jamie Shopland, and I am a candidate for Frederick County Council, District 2. I am testifying in strong support of Senate Bill 584 because it reinforces something rural communities in Council District 2 depend on: respect for landowners, farms, and property rights.

In Frederick County, land is more than acreage on a map. It represents generational family farms, agricultural livelihoods, and the rural heritage that sustains our local economy. When transmission infrastructure like the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP) is proposed, it can directly affect soil conservation, crop planning, livestock operations, and the long-term viability of family farms.

One example close to home is Gaver Farm, which sits directly in the proposed path of a transmission line. My own family has visited this farm for several years to cut our Christmas tree. For us, and for many Frederick County families, it is not just a farm. It is part of my family tradition, our local economy, and our connection to the land. Projects that affect farms like this are not abstract infrastructure decisions; they shape the future of the community itself.

Residents in our district are confronting these realities now as transmission proposals move through our region. Many farmers and rural homeowners feel they are hearing about projects only after routes are drawn and decisions feel predetermined. That erodes trust and leaves landowners scrambling to understand how their property, income, and family legacy may be affected.

SB 584 takes a practical, pro-property-rights step by ensuring certified notice is sent to impacted and adjacent landowners early in the process. This gives farmers, rural homeowners, and agricultural producers the time they need to seek guidance, participate in hearings, and protect their interests.

Just as importantly, the bill gives the notice requirement real weight. When the stakes include farmland preservation, property values, and family livelihoods, notice must be meaningful, not optional. By linking proper notification to the validity of hearings and applications, this legislation strengthens accountability and restores confidence that public input matters.

Frederick County residents support reliable energy infrastructure. But they also expect that when projects affect their land, the process before the Maryland Public Service Commission will be transparent, fair, and respectful of property owners and agricultural communities alike.

I urge the committee and the Maryland General Assembly to give Senate Bill 584 a favorable report.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jamie Shopland  
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By Authority: Friends of Jamie Shopland, Elizabeth Heaney, Treasurer