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RE: House Bill 0040

Dear Delegate Charkoudian and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

I am writing in support of House Bill 0040. I am a concerned citizen impacted by the MPRP proposed transmission line.

The US electricity transmission infrastructure dates to the 1940s and 1950s. The technology is outdated and causes outages due to fires, and accidental or weather-related line breakage. The transmission wires are heavier and carry less energy than newer composite core materials

Thinking about modernization in other industries we rely upon heavily in our daily lives such as housing materials (asbestos removal, modern fire-retardant materials), plumbing supplies (replacing lead pipes), safety technology in vehicles (seat belts, power brakes, air bags) and others. People die annually (down power lines, traffic signal outages, medical device failures and extreme temperature deaths) due to power outages that could be prevented by use of more modern equipment. Wildfires in California and winter storm outages in Texas are current examples of risks of aging lines.

This begs the question of who is monitoring our grid and making sure investments are being made in modernization instead of replacing or building new lines with old technology? Cost incentives for utilities to upgrade are non-existent and our grid is made up of interregional players with competing priorities. After 25 years, transmission lines degrade and fail. Performance, safety and efficiency are at risk.

Smarter, modern grids have composite core lines that carry up to 3x the power, they are lighter in weight and less prone to fire risk and breakage. Supporting structures have grid enhancing technologies, computers that direct power to where it is needed and move excess power to storage batteries for backup use.

We've been learning about this since the MPRP proposal was submitted. Even then, it was apparent that the Federal Government realized the grid requires updating and to protect the public from expansion using "more of the same" the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission passed Order 1920, requiring among other changes, that utilities must

prioritize updating the existing infrastructure. The FERC also noted that there needs to be incentives for utilities to use existing transmission and transportation right of ways for erecting new lines rather than recommending greenfield projects that disrupt private land and finite green spaces. PJM appealed FERC 1920 and is exempt until that is complete. Use of existing transportation right of ways for transmission makes sense, the right of ways are owned by the Dept of Transportation and provide a direct pathway between substations connecting to urban areas where use is highest. This avoids use of ever increasingly finite farmland and green spaces.

I was pleased to see Governor Moore's recent Executive Order, bipartisan Senate Bill 386 and House Bill 0040 that work to codify these important elements of the FERC regulation into Maryland Law and reduce energy costs. This is truly one of those industries that needs to be turned on its head. For too long we have allowed the public to bear the burden of supplying big industry with energy because the public has always paid for transmission costs. With the extraordinarily large energy loads in our modern society such as AI Data Centers, this no longer makes sense. These multi-million dollar corporations look for sweet deals in states with minimal zoning restrictions and fast track approval processes. They provide tax revenue to localities struggling to make ends meet.

Thank you for your attention to these issues and moving forward toward passage of this important bill.

Most sincerely,

Jenny Teeter