

February, 20, 2026

To: Honorable Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Derek Seibel, 2490 Barrister Dr., New Windsor, MD

Honorable Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

I am writing today in support of HB0897 Electricity Transmission and Distribution, Energy Storage, and Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund (Lower Bills and Local Power Act of 2026). My family is one of thousands of Maryland families whose lives have been derailed following the announcement of the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP). The MPRP is a symptom of a broken transmission planning process under which utilities are financially incentivized to overbuild transmission infrastructure. The costs of this overbuilding are rolled directly into Maryland ratepayer's electric bills in addition to destroying the financial future of those who are the path of the proposed projects. As part of the CPCN application for the MPRP, PSEG (the developer) made clear that Advanced Transmission Technologies were given no serious consideration in the Regional Transmission Expansion Planning process as an alternative to an expensive and destructive 70-mile greenfield transmission line.

PJM acknowledges that over 94% of the increase in load forecast is due to large load connection requests (i.e. data centers in Virginia). Throughout PJM's development of its Critical Issue Fast Path initiative, the public has learned that the load forecasting process PJM used to underpin the supposed need for expensive and harmful projects like the MPRP is wildly inaccurate. In Jason Connell's (PJM's Vice President of Planning) October 17, 2025, letter to FERC Chairman Rosner, PJM admits that large load connection requests are frequently duplicative (potentially being included in the total load forecast multiple times) and often speculative (with no consideration given to the likelihood a large load will ever materialize). Additionally, PJM recently revised downward their load forecasts for 2027 by 4GW, before the reforms resulting from the CIFP initiative are even implemented!

These inflated load forecasts and prioritization of utility company profits (which were at all-time highs in 2025 according to Exelon, FirstEnergy, and PSEG's Q4 earnings calls) results in the de-prioritization of less expensive and less harmful alternatives like Advanced Transmission Technologies (ATTs). I believe HB0897 is necessary to codify the prioritization of ATTs in order to serve the best interest of the ratepayers and citizens of Maryland. Utilities and PJM have demonstrated time and again that, if left to their own devices, they will continue to select the "solution" that is the most expensive, longest to build, and most harmful to our communities. Why? Because it makes utilities the most money. I implore

this Committee to provide a favorable recommendation for HB0897 and to subsequently pass HB0897 to codify that the interests of Maryland's citizens must be protected over inflating corporate profits.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input, for your time, and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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