



Written Testimony in Support of HB 1210 Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity and Transmission Lines – Notice to Landowners

Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Joanne Frederick. I am President of Stop MPRP, Inc., and I am also a landowner who stands to lose five percent of the land that originally belonged to my great-grandparents. I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 1210.

I submit this testimony based on direct experience with the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP).

In early July 2024, landowners across Baltimore, Carroll, and Frederick Counties learned — almost entirely through word of mouth — that their property was on one of ten proposed routes for a new high-voltage transmission line. Many families received little or no direct communication prior to public meetings. In some cases, landowners had less than 24 hours’ notice before meetings were held. Neighbors informed neighbors. Social media carried information that formal notice procedures did not.

In December 2024, when the developer filed its Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) application, more than 400 landowners discovered that their property was on what was described as the “final” proposed route.

That route would impact:

- 394 acres of forested land
- 522 acres of cultivated cropland
- 245 acres under conservation easement
- 224 acres protected by Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation easements
- 101 streams and water bodies

These are not abstract numbers. They represent working farms, conserved land, protected waterways, and generational family property.



In April 2025 — shortly after the General Assembly adjourned — the first of what is now five groups of landowners were sued in federal court so the developer could force access to private property for surveys. This occurred before the project has been adjudicated or approved by the Maryland Public Service Commission. Landowners have now invested more than \$400,000 of their own funds defending their constitutional property rights, and an appeal is pending before the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Throughout this process, many adjacent property owners — including individuals whose homes are located near the proposed transmission line — have not received direct, certified notice.

HB 1210 is narrow in scope, but it is significant. It does not stop transmission projects. It does not alter environmental standards or approval criteria. It does not change the authority of the Public Service Commission.

It simply requires that when a developer files a CPCN application for a transmission line, landowners and adjacent property owners receive proactive, certified notice and clear information about their right to intervene. It also ensures that notice requirements have meaningful consequences if they are not followed.

When projects affect protected farmland, conservation easements, forests, and waterways across multiple counties, the minimum expectation should be clear, verified communication to those whose property may be permanently impacted.

HB 1210 strengthens transparency, accountability, and procedural fairness in Maryland's transmission siting process.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

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