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RE: House Bill 1210

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

I am writing in support of House Bill 1210. I am a concerned citizen of Carroll County impacted by the MPRP proposed transmission line and a Board Member of Stop MPRP, Inc, a not-for-profit organization educating impacted community members. I greatly appreciate the Committee addressing this significant problem that results in some citizens being completely unaware of a project with devastating impact on their property, violating their rights to due process to intervene at the Public Service Commission. **You have an opportunity in this bill to level the playing field for those you represent.**

The construction company, PSEG, defined the term “adjacent landowner” in the most narrow way in their application. This limits the number of citizens they must notify who would have the right to intervene in the case at the Public Service Commission. Roger Trudeau, the PJM Manager of Corporate Real Estate, defined adjacent in his testimony of October 17, 2024. He stated letters were sent to landowners within the right of way and those adjacent, within 275 feet of the center line. This means that homes within 276 or more feet of the center line of the transmission line right of way may never be notified about this project. Imagine waking up one morning to find a high voltage transmission line with towers 140 feet tall being constructed less than 300 feet from your home and having no idea up to that point that something like this was about to occur. That is exactly what can happen under existing Maryland regulations, or lack thereof. There is no definition of adjacency in the regulations.

This is a violation of what is commonly considered a citizen’s opportunities to otherwise be involved in planning and zoning issues in their community. It is additionally contradictory to the **PSEG Siting Analysis Criteria** that states under Social Criteria that they must analyze residential buildings within 200 feet of, or within 500 feet of the transmission right of way. 500 feet is referenced as the “zone of potential impact”, the “buffer zone”, that must be considered in applications. If they are required to analyze land within 500 feet of the right way and impacts within that area, why are the landowners within that same area omitted from providing input to that process?

While most of us would define adjacent landowner as a landowner with property abutting the property under the right of way, sharing a property boundary, there is no Maryland COMAR definition of adjacent to a transmission line project. It allows the construction company to select the “impacted” landowners.

In February 2025, PSEG filed an Update to the ERD and Appendix to the application for MPRP at the PSC. This further defined impacted landowners who will be located on the required Access Roads PSEG must build for initial construction and for permanent access to maintain the towers and lines. The permanent access roads will be used as long as the line is in use to inspect and maintain the line and clearcut vegetation and use herbicides. They provided a detailed description of the construction of these roads which add 28 miles, 81 additional acres to the project, 65 acres of which is farmland, rendering it no longer tillable in perpetuity. **Of critical importance to protecting citizen’s rights** is the fact that some of the access roads go through properties that are neither under the right of way, or adjacent. These are landowners directly impacted by only an access road. Maryland regulations include no requirements for notification of property owners of land to be used for access roads. These landowners have **never** been notified. However, it is the right thing to do. This Bill could be improved by adding the requirement to notify those landowners with property planned for access roads.

As this Bill indicates, CPCN Applications must require notification of not only impacted landowners, but those who are adjacent and provide a reasonable definition of adjacent as either an adjoining property sharing a property line or within 500 feet of the right of way. The company must provide evidence of notifying directly impacted, adjacent AND those landowners whose property is used for an access road.

This Bill should apply to any CPCN Application that has yet to be approved by the Public Service Commission as of it’s effective date. That would protect the 404 property owners in the right of way, and the additional 200+ who are adjacent per PSEG’s definition and the countless others who own property abutting the landowner under the right of way whose rights are being trampled upon and those who own property where access roads will be constructed who have never been notified.

Thank you for your attention to these issues and moving forward toward passage of this important bill. Without it, construction companies are taking advantage of the rights of citizens defending their most valuable asset, their legacy for children and their estate used to fund retirement, senior care and credit to grow their business. **You have an opportunity in this bill to level the playing field for those you represent.**

Most sincerely,

Jenny Teeter