
February 27, 2026

RE: Testimony for HB 1210 – Maryland 2026 Legislative Session

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

The Energy Artisans are pleased to provide this written testimony for HB 1210 of the 2026 Maryland legislative session. As a Maryland based entity with extensive experience in development, construction and operation of infrastructure assets in PJM and Maryland, we are well informed to provide testimony regarding the impacts and necessity of HB 1210.

Background

The State of Maryland continues to face significant electric generation deficiencies and is reliant on out-of-State resources to provide electricity during times of high demand. This has been a long-standing issue. The impact is two-fold as time-of-use generation must be imported through high-voltage transmission lines, adding congestion, losses, and other locational related costs. These issue cumulate in reliance on uneconomic in-state generation via Reliability Must Run (RMR) agreements and increased reliability costs via the PJM capacity and transmission processes. One path toward easing the electric generation deficit is for accommodation of additional out-of-state capacity via new high-voltage transmission lines. One of the gating items for transmission planning and construction is a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) from the Public Service Commission (PSC).

Impacts of Transmission Infrastructure

High-voltage transmission infrastructure is a capital-intensive endeavor with long lasting, if not permanent results with both visual and monetary impact. While standard distribution level utility poles extend about 35 feet above ground, lower voltage transmission infrastructure may be, at minimum, 50 feet above ground. This poses a difficulty in covering, protecting, or otherwise shielding the visual impact that lower voltage infrastructure is able to contribute. Additionally, required easement and setbacks on high-voltage transmission limit useable acreage on Marylander's property, thus imposing economic difficulty on those a project is intended to help. Further, transmission owners are allowed to collect a return on this investment as allocated by PJM, ultimately increasing the aggregate transmission rate paid by consumers. Due to these impacts, it is imperative that those most directly impacted by high-voltage transmission planning, namely the landowners are fully engaged in the process from early stages.

Benefits of HB 1210

Engagement of impacted residents and communities is an imperative aspect of any infrastructure project. Early engagement allows these impacted groups to constructively voice their concerns and developers to address these concerns in a timely manner.

Under current law, public service companies are only required to notify landowners 30 days before a public hearing. HB 1210 significantly improves this by requiring companies to send notice via certified mail at the exact same time they apply for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN). Furthermore, the bill expands who receives these notices to include all owners of land abutting the planned construction, as well as owners of adjacent land when an overhead transmission line is proposed. This early notice ensures that affected residents have ample time to prepare, research, and understand how the project will impact their property.

HB 1210 also requires that the notification explicitly informs landowners of their right to file as an intervenor in the proceedings, including the method, location, deadlines, and contact information for the PSC. By providing this information upfront, the bill ensures that residents are not just informed that a project is happening, but are actually empowered to have a voice in the outcome.

Finally, under current law, if a public service company fails to provide the required notice to a landowner, the public hearing is not invalidated unless it can be proven that the failure was "willful or deliberate". This creates a loophole that excuses negligence and leaves un-notified landowners in the dark. HB 1210 strikes this exception, creating a strict standard of accountability. Under the new law, a failure to provide the required notice will automatically invalidate the public hearing or completely void the CPCN application. While the company is permitted to reapply, this strict penalty ensures that utility companies will take their obligation to notify Maryland residents seriously from the very beginning.

HB 1210 is a common-sense piece of legislation that successfully engages Maryland property owners early in the infrastructure development process. It ensures transparency, encourages public participation, and hold applications accountable. For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 1210.

Sincerely,



Patrick Welch
Member
The Energy Artisans
theenergyartisans.com