

Carroll County's Delegation

Senator Justin Ready
Senator Chris West
Delegate Christopher Eric Bouchat

Delegate April Rose
Delegate Joshua Stonko
Delegate Chris Tomlinson

Updated: August 21, 2024

As your State legislators representing Carroll County in the MD General Assembly, we stand firmly opposed to the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP).

Who proposed it? PJM Interconnection, a regional transmission organization (RTO), has been authorized by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to plan/manage our regional electric transmission grid/system and coordinate the sale and movement of electricity for all or part of 13 states (including MD, VA, & PA) and the District of Columbia. PJM identified the need for a new electric transmission line and after advertising a Request for Proposals (RFP), awarded the Project to Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG), a publicly traded diversified energy company out of New Jersey. It is important to note that PSEG has not yet filed an application with the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) to receive the authority (known as a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity, or CPCN) to build the transmission line project.

Why is this being proposed? Northern Virginia is home to the largest data center market in the world (approx. 275 centers). Data centers are large, warehouse-like buildings, often 250,000 or more square feet each, that essentially store and operate the world's internet. Unfortunately, Virginia utilities do not have the energy or transmission capacity to handle the enormous increases in energy consumption by the data centers. PJM's solution is to have a transmission line (MPRP) constructed that will bring energy from a nuclear generating plant in Peach Bottom, PA down through MD that will ultimately provide power for Northern Virginia.

How did we get here? Over the course of many years, states within PJM's power grid territory, including Maryland, have passed policies that make it nearly impossible to create or produce reliable sources of energy. Everything from closing coal power plants to limiting natural gas production to irresponsible "climate" goals that require drastic reduction in production. Just in Maryland, dozens of power plants (coal, oil, natural gas, etc.) have closed over the last two decades. At the same time, new energy sources such as wind and solar are unable to produce equal amounts of energy. As a result, PJM is forced to import energy from states that still generate energy the old-fashioned way (coal, oil, natural gas, etc.) to states that have decided to adopt unachievable net-zero emissions & clean energy goals.

Our delegation has always opposed and voted against policies that have tied our hands and put our region in a dangerous position. At the present moment, Maryland and several other states in our grid territory do not generate enough energy needed to meet our demands – much less future electrification requirements. On top of that, our region's energy needs are dramatically increasing each year. For example, Maryland has banned the sale of new gasoline-powered cars after 2035 which will force Marylanders to purchase electric cars that will only put more of a strain on the grid. We oppose Maryland's ridiculous energy policies that put ideology ahead of reliability and common sense. That is what has led to this crisis.

What can be done to stop the Project? As State legislators we have no direct vote or say into whether or how this plan gets implemented or where the lines go. However, we are working with elected officials in Frederick County & Baltimore County, our federal elected officials, the Governor's office, the Maryland Office of People's Counsel (OPC), and community organizations, to stop the Project from moving forward. During the next legislative session, we will be introducing bills that will support & allow the State to produce reliable energy sources including nuclear, natural gas, & coal and put guardrails around the construction of new data centers.

We believe that PSEG should prioritize putting the transmission line underground or utilize current infrastructure footprints and corridors rather than spoiling agricultural land and harming property owners. In fact, of the 72 proposals received, 22 of them would have upgraded existing infrastructure. Why were those proposals not chosen? In addition, the counties whose legislators have introduced and voted for energy restricting laws year after year, should host this transmission line in their counties.

Who else to contact to ask for their Support in Opposing the Project:

Governor Wes Moore

(410) 974-3901

<https://governor.maryland.gov/contact-us/> - (Select "Contact the Governor" to send email)

Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC)

piedmontcomments.psc@maryland.gov

Maryland Office of People's Counsel (OPC)*

opc@maryland.gov

**The OPC represents the interests of residential and noncommercial users of natural gas, electric, telephone, sewer, & water before the PSC and the courts.*

Our Federal Elected Officials who represent Carroll County in D.C.

Senator Ben Cardin

(202) 224-4524

<https://www.cardin.senate.gov/email-ben/>

Senator Chris Van Hollen

(202) 224-4654

<https://www.vanhollen.senate.gov/contact/email>

Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger

(410) 628-2701

<http://Ruppersberger.house.gov/contact>

Congressman John Sarbanes

(202) 225-4016

<https://sarbanes.house.gov/contact>