



**Center for
Progressive
Reform**

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**Testimony of Bryan Dunning
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**Before the Maryland House of Delegates Environment and Transportation Committee
Requesting a Favorable Report on HB0040: Public Utilities – Transmission Lines –
Advanced Transmission Technologies**

Dear Chairman Korman, Vice-Chair Guyton, and the members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 40. Passage of this bill will result in the state of Maryland taking concrete steps to advance a more reliable and affordable grid for the state. Functionally this means lower costs for transmission borne by Maryland ratepayers, strengthening grid reliability in Maryland, increasing the likelihood of new generation assets coming online in the state, and critically, and achieving this in a substantially shorter time windows than traditional new transmission construction.

Defining advanced transmission technologies (ATTs) broadly to include not only both “grid enhancing technologies” (GETS) and “high-performance conductors”, but also including within the ATT definition “energy storage used for transmission” directs developers and the Maryland Public Service Commission (MD PSC) to utilize a suite of tools that will substantially improve the capacity of Maryland’s grid. This allows for alternatives to traditional transmission construction that will maximize existing transmission infrastructure. This includes both hardware and software upgrades that have comparatively lower capital costs and utilizing storage to advance avoided transmission which will have additional benefits to strengthening the Maryland grid.

Requiring analysis for the integration of ATTs in an application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for overhead transmission lines will give MD PSC the authority needed to ensure that new transmission projects in Maryland are evaluated to ensure that they are least-cost, and most effective for Maryland transmission projects.

Finally, by requiring transmission owners to submit to the commission an analysis of recent, current, and projected (within five years) transmission congestion – *paired with an analysis of deploying ATTs in identified congested regions* – will greatly strengthen grid planning and provide a mechanism for reducing areas of existing transmission congestion. This is crucial to work proactively to implement least-cost interventions to avoid issues with known congestion risk, rather than relying on reactive cost-intensive emergency upgrades to address pending issues only once they have risen to the level of an emergency.

Such evaluation and planning will work to harmonize state efforts with [updates](#) regional transmission planning at PJM, and drive lowered costs in the state and region [for transmission network upgrades](#). This point is critical if Maryland wishes to online new generation, as across the PJM region, new generation assets that have finally cleared the interconnection queue after many years of review are now facing prohibitive network upgrade costs that can preclude the project from moving forward.

Planning and implementation of cost-effective solutions through ATTs maximizes the capabilities of the Maryland grid, and is crucial to meet the challenges of an affordable and reliable energy future. The Center for Progressive Reform accordingly requests that the Environment and Transportation Committee issue a favorable report on HB0040.

Sincerely,

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