

Regional Briefing

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Agency Won't Consider Power Line

The path of a controversial high-voltage power line proposed to snake from West Virginia to Maryland was thrown into question late Wednesday when a state board ruled an application to build the Maryland portion of the line had been filed improperly.

The Maryland Public Service Commission said it couldn't consider the construction permit because of the structure of the joint venture sponsoring the project, a combination of Pennsylvania-based Allegheny Energy and Ohio-based American Electric Power.

Allen Stagers, a spokesman for Allegheny Energy and the Potomac-Appalachian Transmission Highline, or PATH project, said it was too soon to determine the ruling's effect.

The \$1.8 billion project would consist of a 765,000-volt line that would stretch from an Allegheny substation near St. Albans, W. Va., to a proposed substation near Kemptown, Md. Utility officials say the project is needed to relieve strain and meet growing demand for electricity.

-- **Aaron C. Davis**