

Sugarloaf Conservancy

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Legislation Requested to Protect Property Owners and Electric Ratepayers

Sugarloaf Conservancy requests our elected officials pass legislation to mandate a study by an appropriate state agency on the rebuilding of outdated transmission lines. The current practice of waiting until a need for additional transmission capability is so great, where the only course of action is to build a new line, is unwise and unacceptable.

In a response to State Senator Rob Gargioli's letter to the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) on Sugarloaf's behalf, the Chairman of the PSC stated, PJM, the regional grid operator does not consider the rebuilding of transmission lines unless "lines reach the end of their useful life or when they become overloaded..." He further wrote, "In the case of an area with multiple overloaded lines, new lines are more likely to be built."

Dominion Virginia Power is in the process of rebuilding the MT. Storm to Doubs line, which will increase the capacity of the line by 66%. This benefit will not occur unless First Energy obtains a CPCN from the Maryland PSC to rebuild their 2.86 mile portion. To date, they have not filed such a request.

The Mt. Storm to Doubs rebuild clearly demonstrates a need for a change in the way additional transmission capability is evaluated. The rebuilding of outdated lines, even if they are not currently overloaded or have reached the end of their useful life could possibly eliminate the need for the confiscation of property through the use of Eminent Domain. It is also likely that the rebuilding of existing lines would be less costly and thus, would save Maryland ratepayers in their electric bills.

Sugarloaf Conservancy asks for the Maryland General Assembly (see attached sample letter) to help protect Maryland citizens and pass legislation to remedy the current situation where the electric utility companies have more financial incentives to build new lines than to rebuild outdated lines.