



Your Voice. Your Vote.

Maryland’s leaders respond to survey questions about the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project

FOX45 News surveyed state and county elected officials between August 27 and August 30, 2024, about their current positions on the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP). The officials surveyed either have constituents directly affected by the project or they represent districts near the project’s study zone.

The MPRP is a transmission infrastructure development project awarded by power grid operator PJM to New Jersey-based power line developer Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG). As currently proposed by PSEG, the project seeks to construct 70 miles of new power lines that will cut through Baltimore, Carroll and Frederick Counties. The project will connect a power site in Baltimore County near the Pennsylvania state line to a substation near the Potomac River in Frederick County, according to PSEG.

The power line developer says on their website they may seek to use eminent domain to acquire the private property and right-of-way easements necessary to advance the project. PSEG will need to gain permitting access from the Maryland Public Service Commission to move forward with the project’s development. The developer has repeatedly said they intend to file in late 2024 for the necessary permits.

The brief survey presented to 51 elected officials focused on questions FOX45 News documented over the two months during interviews with impacted community residents. These four questions also were generated by common resident themes voiced in August 2024 during non-partisan, community-led town halls.

Table of Contents

Contents

- Table of Contents** 1
- Questions**..... 2
- Survey Results** 2
- STATE GOVERNMENT..... 2
- MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEADERSHIP 2
- DISTRICT 2 – FREDERICK COUNTY 3
- DISTRICT 3 – FREDERICK COUNTY 3
- DISTRICT 4 – FREDERICK COUNTY 4
- DISTRICT 5 – CARROLL AND FREDERIC COUNTIES 5
- DISTRICT 7 – BALTIMORE COUNTY 6
- DISTRICT 10 – BALTIMORE COUNTY 7



DISTRICT 11 – BALTIMORE COUNTY 8

DISTRICT 42 – BALTIMORE AND CARROLL COUNTIES..... 8

LOCAL GOVERNMENT 9

BALTIMORE COUNTY..... 9

CARROLL COUNTY 10

FREDERICK COUNTY 12

Questions

MPRP SUPPORT: Do you support or oppose the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project as it is currently presented?

STATE GOVERNMENT: What information, support or details has the state government provided to you as an elected official about the transmission line expansion?

EMINENT DOMAIN: Do you support the use of eminent domain to advance the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project?

GOVERNOR: Has Gov. Wes Moore’s office reached out to you or your office regarding this project? If so, when?

Survey Results

STATE GOVERNMENT

MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEADERSHIP

Senate President Bill Ferguson (D)

I haven’t been personally briefed on the specifics of the project. What I do know is that this issue highlights the very real challenges of electrification and the energy transition ahead. The climate crisis demands that we move towards electrification and decarbonization. Demand and use for electricity is only increasing.

We have to build and maintain a 21st-century electrical grid. But, how we get there, how we practically accomplish the necessary upgrades to our energy distribution and transmission network, and the intersection with individual property rights are key issues highlighted by this project.

I am monitoring the process and project closely to see where our policy choices moving forward can better balance the demands of the energy transition and residents’ understandable concerns about the impacts of large infrastructure projects like this one.

House Speaker Adrienne Jones (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.



DISTRICT 2 – FREDERICK COUNTY

Sen. Paul Corderman (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: Oppose

STATE GOVERNMENT: None

EMINENT DOMAIN: No

GOVERNOR: Has not.

Del. William Valentine (R)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Del. William Wivell (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: As proposed, I have signed onto the Frederick County Delegation in opposition to this project due mainly to its lack of public input, failure to use existing transmission rights-of-way and the increased cost to electric customers. OPC already projects increases in electric rates at 24% this coming year for Potomac Edison’s Maryland customers. Projects such as these are driven by MD energy policy, the war on fossil fuels and the drive for all-electric structures (Climate Solutions Now Act). Marylanders – hold onto your wallets! It’s only gonna [sic] get worse. The existing utility infrastructure cannot handle the increased load.

STATE GOVERNMENT: None. Have utilized other sources.

EMINENT DOMAIN: No.

GOVERNOR: No.

DISTRICT 3 – FREDERICK COUNTY

Sen. Karen Lewis Young (D)

MPRP SUPPORT: Sen. Lewis Young opposes this project as it is currently presented.

STATE GOVERNMENT: The senator performs her own research independent of the State Government.

EMINENT DOMAIN: Sen. Lewis Young opposes the use of eminent domain for this project.

GOVERNOR: Sen. Lewis Young reached out to the Governor’s office and met with a representative of his office at the Maryland Association of Counties summer conference.

Del. Kristopher Fair (D)

This elected official did not respond directly to survey requests. An acknowledgment was provided with a related previous quote.



EDITOR'S NOTES: Del. Fair's office directed his response to a previous quote he provided to the Frederick News Post. "There is an answer here. We need good folks to come to the table and talk about what are our energy demands... and how do we meet those demands in a community-conscious way," Del. Fair said. "The Maryland Tech Council really took a lead in saying, 'You know what, we're going to start the big public conversation about what is it we need with data centers.' There's countless conversations that should spring off of this conference."

Del. Kenneth Kerr (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Del. Karen Simpson (D)

MPRP SUPPORT: The project needs more community input. Our office has received many emails from residents expressing concerns about the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project. We are listening and considering the impacts on our community. I am committed to collaborating with our residents, our elected partners at the state, county and local levels, our state agency partners and the project stakeholders for more discussion towards an agreement with impacted communities *before* this project moves forward.

STATE GOVERNMENT: My office met with Jim Gilroy, PSEG governmental affairs representative for a very brief meeting in June. We brought up many of the potential concerns and need for coordination and were assured these things would happen. The lack of information about the project and partnerships with public officials is concerning. This is a project that I am most grateful to our media partners for keeping everyone informed. That said, I am a member of the Judiciary Committee and while the project will impact my community, this issue will not be heard in my legislative committee, so I lean heavily on my district mate, Sen. Karen Lewis Young.

EMINENT DOMAIN: Eminent domain should not be used recklessly. Our residents and local and federal partners have serious concerns about the use of eminent domain to expedite the completion of this project. PSEG needs to coordinate and plan the project with the counties and municipalities and residents to create a plan of least disruption to our agricultural/tourism, our preservation efforts and historic areas. They need to be smart, transparent and collaborative!

GOVERNOR: This elected official did not respond to this survey question.

DISTRICT 4 – FREDERICK COUNTY

Sen. William Folden (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: Oppose

STATE GOVERNMENT: Nothing from the state.

EMINENT DOMAIN: Absolutely not. Find a better path forward.

GOVERNOR: No.



Del. Barrie Ciliberti (R)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Del. April Miller (R)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Del. Jesse Pippy (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I am strongly opposed to the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project.

STATE GOVERNMENT: The state has not provided any information, support or details about this project.

EMINENT DOMAIN: I do not support the use of eminent domain.

GOVERNOR: The governor has not reached out to my office about this project.

DISTRICT 5 – CARROLL AND FREDERIC COUNTIES

Sen. Justin Ready (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: No. Absolutely opposed.

STATE GOVERNMENT: Nothing from the state government. I've done a lot of research on my own about the state's approach to energy, environmental policy, etc., but I have received nothing from the state.

EMINENT DOMAIN: No, I do not.

GOVERNOR: I have spoken to a member of his staff, but I was the one who contacted them. The couple of staff members I have spoken to were responsive when I reached out but there was no proactive or initiated calls or emails from anyone in the Moore administration.

Del. Christopher Eric Bouchat (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I am opposed to it and the energy policies that caused it. Self-inflicted environmental damage upon our food-producing rural countryside does not sound very environmentally friendly to me or my constituents.

STATE GOVERNMENT: This elected official did not respond to this survey question.

EMINENT DOMAIN: This elected official did not respond to this survey question.

GOVERNOR: This elected official did not respond to this survey question.



Del. April Rose (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I oppose the project.

STATE GOVERNMENT: I received the proposed maps the Sunday before the community meeting PSEG held in July. I did not get any information prior to that.

EMINENT DOMAIN: I do not support eminent domain being used on my constituents' property. I think that existing easements and rights-of-way should be used.

GOVERNOR: I have not heard from anyone in the Governor's office about this project.

Del. Chris Tomlinson (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: Oppose.

STATE GOVERNMENT: Our state government has not provided me with any information about the line. From what I understand, they haven't known about the line for a long time, so they are still on a fact-finding mission like the rest of us.

EMINENT DOMAIN: No.

GOVERNOR: Not necessarily with my office, but the governor's office has been working very closely with our county commissioners and they have been very responsive. Gov. Moore personally met with our county commissioners two weeks ago for 30-45 minutes to discuss the project.

DISTRICT 7 – BALTIMORE COUNTY

Sen. J. B. Jennings (R)

This elected official did not directly respond to survey requests.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Sen. Jennings told FOX45 News in an email that he opposes the Piedmont project. The elected official added, "Why are we shutting down power plants that are running efficiently."

Del. Ryan Nawrocki (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I vehemently oppose this project. This is an ill-conceived project that is aimed to attack farms and many of Maryland's rural communities.

STATE GOVERNMENT: I have received nothing from the state regarding this project. Rather, a bipartisan group of elected officials has been working together to oppose this project due to the outcry from the public.

EMINENT DOMAIN: No, eminent domain should only be used when absolutely necessary and not for projects like this aimed to enrich a few while harming thousands.

GOVERNOR: No, Wes Moore is too busy campaigning across the country attempting to elect more radical liberals to encourage dangerous policies like these instead of being concerned about the well-being of hardworking Marylanders.



Del. Kathy Szeliga (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I oppose this project.

STATE GOVERNMENT: We have yet to receive anything from the state regarding this project. The public is strongly opposed and so am I.

EMINENT DOMAIN: No, I oppose using eminent domain for this project. I do not think this project has investigated using existing right-of-way. Citizens and taxpayers have invested billions of dollars over the last 50 years to purchase and preserve land through a .5% transfer tax on all real estate sales in Maryland. This project is not keeping with 50 years of investments.

GOVERNOR: No.

DISTRICT 10 – BALTIMORE COUNTY

Sen. Benjamin Brooks (D)

This elected official did not directly respond to survey requests.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Sen. Brooks's office acknowledged the receipt of the survey. His office said his delegation was in the process of preparing a letter about the subject. At the time of publication, the letter was not provided.

Del. Jennifer White Holland (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Del. Adrienne Jones (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Del. N. Scott Phillips (D)

MPRP SUPPORT: As currently proposed, I do not support the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project.

STATE GOVERNMENT: I am unaware of [the] state government providing briefing documents regarding the project.

EMINENT DOMAIN: As the project currently stands, I do not support eminent domain as a toll to bring this project to fruition.

GOVERNOR: I have not been contacted by the Governor's office, we have received a notice from the Public Service Commission.



DISTRICT 11 – BALTIMORE COUNTY

Sen. Shelly Hettleman (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Del. Cheryl Pasteur (D)

Editor’s Note: The Delegate did not directly respond to survey questions but did provide thoughts on the MPRP. Del. Pasteur said: “Sen. Brooks and Del. White-Holland have articulated an outstanding position on this matter. We are interested in safeguarding the property and well-being of our constituents while meeting our needs. The Senator and Delegate have composed a position which expresses our thoughts and asks pertinent questions.”

Del. Jon Cardin (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Del. Dana Stein (D)

This elected official did not directly respond to survey requests.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Del. Stein acknowledged the receipt of the survey. She said her delegation was in the process of preparing a letter about the subject with Sen. Benjamin Brooks. At the time of publication, the letter was not provided.

DISTRICT 42 – BALTIMORE AND CARROLL COUNTIES

Sen. Chris West (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: No.

STATE GOVERNMENT: The state of Maryland has not provided me with any information because the state knows no more about this project than me. The project was green-lighted by PJM, a regional energy regulator, and it lateralled the ball to PSEG, a New Jersey utility company which received a contract from PJM to plan and construct the new transmission corridor. Maryland voters, residents, business, government leaders and regulators have played no role in this process to date.

EMINENT DOMAIN: No.

GOVERNOR: No. I briefly spoke to the Governor about the project and believe that he feels the same way I do about it.

Del. Nino Mangione (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I am totally opposed to the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project.



STATE GOVERNMENT: The only details from state agencies I have received was that the PSC has opened a dedicated email to accept comments from constituents. Other than that, my office has not received any further information.

EMINENT DOMAIN: I totally oppose the use of eminent domain to advance MPRP.

GOVERNOR: Gov. Moore, nor his office, have contracted me or my office regarding this project.

Del. Michele Guyton (D)

MPRP SUPPORT: As originally presented (there has been no formal proposal or application as yet) I am opposed to MPRP.

STATE GOVERNMENT: No information at all from state government. I have personally reached out to the Secretary of Agriculture who has been available and helpful.

EMINENT DOMAIN: No, I strongly oppose the use of eminent domain on agricultural and preserved land. In fact, I have already submitted legislation about this to General Assembly bill drafters for pre-filing this session.

GOVERNOR: No. MPRP did reach out several months ago to alert me to the project and to ask which community groups they should engage in conversation in the area.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BALTIMORE COUNTY

County Executive Johnny Olszewski (D)

MPRP SUPPORT: As detailed in the County Executive's July 31 letter, the administration supports efforts to improve the resiliency and reliability of our regional electric grid, but has serious concerns about this project. We believe much more dialogue is needed about the project's impacts on our residents before any actions are taken to advance this project.

STATE GOVERNMENT: We have shared our concerns directly with the governor and his office related to the project, and anticipate continued discussions regarding the underlying need for the project as well as specific details regarding the proposal.

EMINENT DOMAIN: The County Executive's July 31 letter to the Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG) included his firm opposition to the use of eminent domain and a request that the option be taken out of consideration completely.

GOVERNOR: We have shared our concerns directly with the governor and his office related to the project, and anticipate continued discussions regarding the underlying need for the project as well as specific details regarding the proposal.

Councilman Pat Young (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.



Councilman Izzy Patoka (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Councilman Wade Kach (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: Oppose.

STATE GOVERNMENT: Neither me nor my office have heard from state officials. Only the PR firm representing the company behind the project.

EMINENT DOMAIN: Absolutely not. As a good-faith gesture to the possible impacted communities, it should be removed from consideration.

GOVERNOR: I have yet to hear from his office on this or any other matter.

Councilman Julian Jones (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Councilman David Marks (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I oppose the project as presented.

STATE GOVERNMENT: I do not recall receiving any information.

EMINENT DOMAIN: No, I do not.

GOVERNOR: No.

Councilman Mike Ertel (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Councilman Todd Crandell (R)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

CARROLL COUNTY

Commissioner Joe Vigliotti (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I oppose the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project.

STATE GOVERNMENT: To my knowledge, this is potential/pending (please see my response to the [last] question). I have personally, directly, not received any formal communication from the state. It should



be noted that all Delegates and Senators who represent Carroll County in Annapolis are also opposed to the MPRP, and have been in regular communication with us, and we are grateful for that.

EMINENT DOMAIN: I categorically and absolutely oppose the use of eminent domain, especially when citizens are expected to shoulder the burden for a benefit they will not receive.

GOVERNOR: Two of our Commissioners have personally met with the Governor to express opposition to the project in recent weeks, and to solicit his support in some way. I welcome and implore the Governor to officially add his voice and his weight to the campaign against the project.

Commissioner Kenneth Kiler (R)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Commissioner Tom Gordon (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I strongly oppose this project.

STATE GOVERNMENT: None, other than what both we and the public were informed of.

EMINENT DOMAIN: Absolutely not. I do not support eminent domain to advance this project.

GOVERNOR: The Governor's office has not reached out regarding this project. Two of our Commissioners met with the Governor at MACO to express and discuss our concerns and stance against the project.

Commissioner Michael Guerin (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I have been forthcoming about my staunch opposition to the MPRP from the beginning.

STATE GOVERNMENT: I am not aware of any information the state has provided to Carroll County with regard to MPRP. PSEG seems to have no answers. If the state has information the public does not they should share it.

EMINENT DOMAIN: I certainly do not support the use of "eminent domain" to support the advance of MPRP.

GOVERNOR: I am not aware of any correspondence between the Governor's office and the Carroll County Government that addresses MPRP and its potential impact on our county, homes, businesses, farms and neighborhoods.

Commissioner Ed Rothstein (R)

This elected official did not directly respond to survey requests.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Commissioner Rothstein refused to provide direct survey answers, instead providing a general quote. "I, along with the rest of the board of commissioners, stand with our citizens and oppose



the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project. We are working to find ways to stop the project, including coordinating with our delegation, elected officials in other jurisdictions and the state in determining what specific options we have which we can level against the MRPR,” Commissioner Rothstein said.

FREDERICK COUNTY

County Executive Jessica Fitzwater (D)

MPRP SUPPORT: I fully understand the need to improve the resiliency and reliability of the regional electrical grid to ensure the dependability of the electrical supply; however, there must be more dialogue before this project moves forward. Our community feels like they’ve been kept in the dark, and they expect more information before PSEG files their application with the Public Service Commission.

STATE GOVERNMENT: My administration has been in dialogue with the governor’s office about the project. We are especially concerned about the potential impact the project could have on our Peace and Plenty Rural Historic District and Hope Hill, a historically black rural community.

EMINENT DOMAIN: I oppose the use of eminent domain for this project. I have serious concerns about the impact eminent domain would have on our residents, our agricultural community and our businesses along the proposed path.

GOVERNOR: My administration has been in dialogue with the governor’s office about the project. We are especially concerned about the potential impact the project could have on our Peace and Plenty Rural Historic District and Hope Hill, a historically black rural community.

Councilman Jerry Donald (D)

MPRP SUPPORT: I oppose the project as it now stands. I prefer that the right-of-ways now being used be upgraded rather than create new ones.

STATE GOVERNMENT: This elected official did not respond to this survey question.

EMINENT DOMAIN: This elected official did not respond to this survey question.

GOVERNOR: This elected official did not respond to this survey question.

Councilman Steve McKay (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I categorically oppose the MPRP as it is currently proposed, and in any alternative proposal that remains a “greenfield project,” rather than using the existing powerline rights-of-way.

STATE GOVERNMENT: I have not received any information from the state government on this project.

EMINENT DOMAIN: I am categorically opposed to any use of eminent domain in support of the MPRP.

GOVERNOR: I have not had any contact from Gov. Moore’s office. I am aware, however, that he met with Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater, the Carroll County Board of Commissioners and the Baltimore County Executive during the recent MACO conference, where concerns about the project were shared.



Councilwoman M. C. Keegan-Ayer (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Councilman Kavonte Duckett (D)

This elected official did not respond to survey requests.

Councilman Mason Carter (R)

MPRP SUPPORT: I am opposed to MPRP, as displayed in my opposition letter that I signed on with Council President Brad Young and Councilmember Steve McKay.

STATE GOVERNMENT: I have not been in contact with anybody from Gov. Moore’s office or his administration. I have surface level conversation with elected officials at multiple levels, in Frederick County and neighboring counties.

EMINENT DOMAIN: No, I do not support the use of eminent domain for corporate gain.

GOVERNOR: No.

Councilman Brad Young (D)

MPRP SUPPORT: No, I do not.

STATE GOVERNMENT: The same that the general public has.

EMINENT DOMAIN: I understand that sometimes eminent domain is necessary, but it should be an absolute last resort.

GOVERNOR: Not directly.

EDITOR’S NOTE: The councilman pointed to a letter he signed expressing “surprise” about the MPRP and that the project “raises serious concerns.”

Councilwoman Renee Knapp (D)

This elected official did not respond directly to survey requests.

EDITOR’S NOTE: An acknowledgment was received from Councilwoman Knapp citing a joint letter written by Frederick County leaders to PSEG asking for more public input to occur in a process where “we have serious concerns about any use of eminent domain to expedite the completion of this project.”