



WHEREAS, the 500 kV Mid-Atlantic Resiliency Link (MARL) and the proposed 765 kV transmission (Valley Link) projects are designed chiefly to carry electricity from generation in Pennsylvania and West Virginia to data-center loads in Loudoun County, Virginia, leaving Hampshire County to host high-voltage towers while receiving no meaningful local benefits.

WHEREAS, Hampshire County's scenic ridges, valleys, and historic landscapes are the backbone of a growing tourism economy, and precious beyond measure to the people that call Hampshire County home; overhead lines and 160-foot steel lattice towers would mar signature views, deter visitors, undermine tourism-based enterprises, and cause immeasurable harm to those to whom these hills and valleys hold sentimental value.

WHEREAS, studies show homes and vacant land adjacent to or in the view-shed of high-voltage transmission lines suffer, eroding both personal equity and the local tax base;

WHEREAS, the use of eminent domain to condemn private property for a line that primarily serves out-of-state interests would irreparably harm Hampshire County citizens and contravene the public-benefit standard required for such takings;

WHEREAS, modern alternatives—including reconductoring existing lines, advanced grid control devices, efficiency measures or additional production at the load centers, and, if new capacity is unavoidable, high-voltage underground cable installed in existing highway corridors—can meet regional reliability needs while avoiding visual blight, reducing land seizure, and improving storm resilience at a cost estimated at roughly twice (not ten times) that of overhead construction;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DECLARED by the County Commission of Hampshire County, West Virginia, that:

1. The Commission opposes the siting or construction of MARL 500 kV or 765 kV Valley Link overhead transmission lines within Hampshire County boundaries, as such facilities would damage natural beauty, impair tourism, diminish property values, and confer no commensurate benefit on local residents.
2. The Commission urges PJM Interconnection, project developers, state regulatory bodies, and relevant federal agencies to give first priority to alternatives that avoid new overhead corridors—specifically: (a) maximizing existing transmission assets; (b) deploying grid-enhancing technologies; (c) promoting efficiency and distributed generation near the load; and (d) where new lines are indispensable, burying them within state or federal highway rights-of-way using proven underground high-voltage technology.
3. The Commission calls on all elected officials representing Hampshire County to withhold approvals, permits, or subsidies for any proposal that fails to incorporate the less-destructive alternatives described herein and to advocate vigorously on behalf of the County's landscape, economy, and citizens.
4. The Commission directs that this Declaration be transmitted to PJM Interconnection, the corporate entities proposing MARL and the 765 kV line, the West Virginia Public Service Commission, the Virginia State Corporation Commission, and to state and federal elected officials so they may be fully informed of Hampshire County's position and concerns.