



UV Measurement and Process Control Instruments

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Commissioners of the Virginia State Corporation Commission
P.O. Box 1197
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Commissioners,

I, Joe May, member of the Northern Virginia community, practicing technologist and former member of the Virginia House of Delegates, hereby submit this letter of support of the undergrounding of 500kV and 230 kV transmission lines along the Aspen to Golden project as put forth by the County of Loudoun and Lansdowne Conservancy. I played a key role in the undergrounding pilot program for Loudoun's very first 230kV transmission line along the W&OD Trail. Drawing upon my extensive experience in both the legislative and technical realms, I offer a perspective rooted in engineering expertise, pragmatic problem-solving, and a deep commitment to the welfare of Virginia's citizens.

Statement of Interest

The issue before the Commission holds significant implications for the reliability, resilience, and sustainability of Virginia's energy infrastructure. As such, it is imperative to advocate for solutions that not only meet the present needs but also position the Commonwealth for long-term success in an increasingly dynamic and interconnected energy landscape.

Engineering Considerations

From an engineering standpoint, the undergrounding of the 500kV and 230 kV transmission lines presents a compelling solution to the challenges posed by conventional above-ground installations. By minimizing exposure to environmental factors, such as extreme weather events and vegetation encroachment, underground transmission lines offer enhanced reliability and reduced maintenance requirements over their operational lifespan.

Technological Advancements

Furthermore, recent advancements in underground transmission technologies, such as alternating current (AC) systems and advanced insulation materials, have significantly improved the efficiency, performance, and cost-effectiveness of underground installations. By leveraging these innovations, Virginia can overcome historical barriers to undergrounding and realize the full potential of this transformative approach to energy transmission.

Environmental Benefits

In addition to technical advantages, undergrounding transmission lines offers substantial environmental benefits, including reduced visual impact, minimal habitat disruption, and enhanced aesthetic appeal. By preserving the natural beauty of our landscapes and mitigating the ecological footprint of energy infrastructure, underground installations align with Virginia's values of environmental stewardship and responsible development.

Public Safety and Welfare

Moreover, underground transmission lines contribute to public safety and welfare by eliminating the risks associated with overhead lines, such as electrocution hazards, wildfire ignition, and aesthetic blight. By enhancing the resilience of our energy grid and ensuring uninterrupted power supply, underground installations safeguard the well-being and tranquility of communities across the Commonwealth.

Conclusion

In conclusion, as a former Delegate, electrical engineer and businessman, I strongly urge the Virginia State Corporation Commission to prioritize the undergrounding of the 500kV and 230 kV transmission lines along the Aspen to Golden as presented by the County of Loudoun. By embracing this innovative and forward-thinking approach, we can enhance the reliability, resilience, and sustainability of Virginia's energy infrastructure while preserving our natural heritage and ensuring the safety and welfare of all citizens.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe T. May