

HOUSE BILL 431

C5

1lr0662

By: **Montgomery County Delegation**

Introduced and read first time: January 15, 2021

Assigned to: Economic Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Montgomery County – Interference With Electric Company’s Vegetation**
3 **Management Compliance – Exemption**

4 **MC 10–21**

5 FOR the purpose of exempting Montgomery County from the prohibition against taking
6 certain actions that interfere with, or materially increase the cost of, an electric
7 company’s compliance with certain vegetation management standards; and
8 generally relating to vegetation management in Montgomery County.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
10 Article – Public Utilities
11 Section 7–213(a) and (d)
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

14 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
15 Article – Public Utilities
16 Section 7–213(e)
17 Annotated Code of Maryland
18 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

19 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
20 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

21 **Article – Public Utilities**

22 7–213.

23 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



- 2. downed wire response;
- 3. customer communications;
- 4. vegetation management;
- 5. periodic equipment inspections;
- 6. annual reliability reporting; and
- 7. any other standards established by the Commission;

(ii) account for major outages caused by events outside the control of an electric company; and

(iii) for an electric company that fails to meet the applicable service quality and reliability standards, require the electric company to file a corrective action plan that details specific actions the company will take to meet the standards.

(2) The regulations adopted under subsection (d) of this section may include a separate reliability standard for each electric company in order to account for system reliability differentiating factors, including:

- (i) system design;
- (ii) existing infrastructure;
- (iii) customer density; and
- (iv) geography.

(3) In adopting the regulations required under subsection (d) of this section, the Commission shall:

(i) consider applicable standards of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers;

(ii) ensure that the service quality and reliability standards are cost-effective; and

(iii) with respect to standards relating to vegetation management, consider:

- 1. limitations on an electric company's right to access private property; and
- 2. customer acceptance of vegetation management

1 initiatives.

2 (4) (I) THIS PARAGRAPH DOES NOT APPLY IN MONTGOMERY
3 COUNTY.

4 (II) A county or municipal corporation may not adopt or enforce a
5 local law, rule, or regulation or take any other action that interferes with, or materially
6 increases the cost of the work of an electric company toward, compliance with the
7 vegetation management standards adopted under subsection (d) of this section.

8 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
9 October 1, 2021.