

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**September 10, 2026**

## **PSC STAFF RECOMMENDS DENIAL OF MARL, FINDS PROJECT JUSTIFICATION WAS OUTDATED BEFORE APPLICATION WAS FILED**

**FORT ASHBY, W.Va.** — Testimony filed this week with the West Virginia Public Service Commission has significantly strengthened the case against NextEra Energy Transmission MidAtlantic's proposed Mid-Atlantic Resiliency Link (MARL), with PSC Staff recommending that the Commission deny the application in full.

PSC Staff concluded that the analysis supporting the need for MARL "was outdated before the Application was filed." Staff further found that no evidence presented in the case demonstrates that MARL provides a useful, material benefit to West Virginia. Asked directly whether MARL carries "material, useful benefits for West Virginia," the Staff engineer answered: "No."

The Staff engineer also rejected the suggestion that West Virginia's energy infrastructure would face severe risk if MARL is not built. Instead, he testified:

*"The most likely outcome of the MARL Project not being built is the energizing of fewer data centers in Virginia."*

His recommendation to the Commission was equally direct:

*"I recommend that the Commission deny the application in full."*

"This is a major development in the MARL case," said Anthony "Tony" Campbell, President of West Virginians Against Transmission Injustice (WATI). "PSC Staff has independently examined the evidence and reached the same fundamental conclusion West Virginians have been raising for months: the justification for this project does not withstand scrutiny."

WATI expert witness Cathy Kunkel also filed testimony examining MARL's costs, projected data-center demand and the financial consequences for West Virginia ratepayers. Kunkel estimates West Virginia ratepayers could pay approximately \$210 million over 15 years and approximately \$400 million over 40 years in MARL related transmission costs.

### **WEST VIRGINIANS PUT THE IMPACTS INTO THE RECORD**

WATI's review of the September 8 testimony record identified 45 individuals represented in testimony and statements, including witnesses from all four West Virginia counties crossed by MARL; Monongalia, Preston, Mineral and Hampshire. Their testimony describes impacts to homes, farms, family land, businesses and communities.

Greg Moyers, a Preston County landowner, testified:

*"The MARL project will change the character of my land forever and my way of life."*

Moyers described gardening, hunting with his son, walking his property with his dog and generations of his family caring for the land. He asked Commissioners to consider "what it would be like if someone else laid claim to their backyard."

Lynn Cookson, whose Hampshire County homesite lies directly within the proposed MARL corridor, testified:

*"These are not abstract impacts to me or to my neighbors. They are permanent changes to our homes, our land, our access, and the community we have worked for decades to preserve."*

Hampshire County landowner Sara Evans, who has lived on her property for 48 years, testified:

*"I cannot believe I am 73 years old and fighting to preserve my home. The view, income, way of life and peace of mind will be destroyed if MARL is approved."*

Evans later asked the Commission not to allow MARL "to destroy the legacy for our children and grandchildren."

Hampshire County Commissioner J. Logan Mantz also submitted testimony describing the county's MARL community survey. Of 452 responses, 95.1 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that MARL would be in the best interest of West Virginia and its citizens, while 95.6 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that MARL strikes an acceptable balance between power needs and environmental factors.

"The PSC Staff testimony confirms many of the concerns that West Virginians and I have raised about MARL," said Delegate Rick Hillenbrand. "West Virginia citizens should not be asked to sacrifice their property nor shoulder a significant share of the costs of a transmission project whose need and benefits to our state remain seriously in question."

"West Virginia should not become an extension cord for development elsewhere while our landowners, communities, ratepayers, and beautiful mountain vistas bear the consequences. I support the PSC Staff's recommendation to deny MARL and will continue to stand with the West Virginians affected by this project."

PSC Staff also reported that, as of September 4, 7,902 public comments protested MARL compared with just 153 comments in support.

"Nearly 8,000 people have formally protested this project, testimony has now come from all impacted counties, and PSC Staff has recommended denial," Campbell said. "WATI agrees. The Commission should deny the MARL application."

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#### About WATI

West Virginians Against Transmission Injustice (WATI) is a nonpartisan, grassroots 501(c)(4) organization advocating for West Virginia landowners, communities and ratepayers affected by large interstate transmission projects.

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