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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 44

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 14, 2026

Requesting the State Corporation Commission's Division of Public Utility Regulation to study the undergrounding of electrical transmission lines. Report.

Patron—Singh

Committee Referral Pending

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the Commonwealth, pursuant to § 45.2-1705 of the Code of Virginia, to facilitate the availability and delivery of reliable and adequate supplies of energy to industrial, commercial, and residential users at reasonable costs; and

WHEREAS, demand for electricity in the Commonwealth is anticipated to double within the next 10 years, with the data center industry being the primary source of such demand; and

WHEREAS, the development of electrical transmission lines is a complex process subject to input and approval by various entities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the State Corporation Commission's Division of Public Utility Regulation be requested to study the undergrounding of electrical transmission lines.

In conducting its study, the State Corporation Commission's Division of Public Utility Regulation (the Division) shall evaluate the potential benefits and associated costs of constructing electrical transmission lines in whole or in part underground and identify options for streamlining the permitting and approval processes for such construction. In conducting its study, the Division shall consult with stakeholders as needed, including representatives from governing bodies of localities across the Commonwealth, PJM Interconnection, electric utilities, technical experts, and any other stakeholders the Division deems relevant.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Division by the Department of Energy. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Division for this study, upon request.

The Division shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2026, and shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports no later than the first day of the 2027 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.