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SENATE BILL NO. 497

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor
on February 12, 2026)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Perry)

A BILL to direct the Department of Transportation to identify opportunities for siting certain transmission lines in existing state highway rights-of-way; report.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. *That in the siting of new electric transmission facilities, including high-voltage transmission lines, it is the policy of the Commonwealth that existing linear infrastructure corridors, including existing utility corridors and highways corridors, shall be prioritized over new corridors. Consideration of priority corridors shall be done to the greatest extent such prioritization is feasible and in a manner that is (i) consistent with economic and engineering considerations, (ii) ensuring reliability of the electric grid, and (iii) protective of cultural and historical resources and the environment.*

§ 2. *That the Department of Transportation shall convene a work group of relevant stakeholders, including the State Corporation Commission and members of the Virginia Utility Coordinating Committee, to identify opportunities and develop recommendations to amend regulations and permitting processes to facilitate the expedient and efficient siting of new electrical transmission infrastructure in existing state highway rights-of-way. The work group shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Chairs of the House Committees on Labor and Commerce and Transportation and the Senate Committees on Commerce and Labor and Transportation by November 1, 2026.*

**SENATE
SUBSTITUTE**

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