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TTU ISERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

July 6, 2007

The Honorable Samuel W. Bodman
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington DC 20585

Re: Docket No. 2007-OE-01

Dear Secretary Bodman:

I am writing to express Maryland's concerns about the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) recent designation of the Mid-Atlantic Area National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC), which includes all of Maryland except one county. This designation seems to go beyond the intent of the original Energy Policy Act, which required the DOE to examine transmission congestion and constraints and to suggest solutions.

DOE wrote in its 2006 National Electric Congestion Study that "congestion solutions will be based upon a thorough review of generation, transmission, distribution and demand-side options, and that such options will be evaluated against a range of scenarios concerning load growth, energy prices, and resource development patterns to ensure the robustness of the proposed solutions." In Maryland's view, this analysis needs to be completed and discussed by the various affected states before transmission corridors can be identified as the appropriate course of action.

Maryland has a longstanding procedure for reviewing and evaluating applications for Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity for new generating and transmission facilities to be located in the State. This process incorporates analysis of environmental, socioeconomic and engineering aspects of new energy facilities. Maryland has successfully worked collaboratively with utility companies to approve projects that help the State meet its energy needs in a timely manner and at a reasonable cost while protecting its valuable natural resources. Providing the federal backstop mechanism associated with a NIETC designation will significantly reduce incentives for such cooperative efforts.

