

EXEMPT FROM LOCAL ZONING CERTAIN SITES, TO ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITY TO THE SECRETARY OF NATURAL RESOURCES ON APPLICATIONS TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION FOR CERTIFICATES OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY ASSOCIATED WITH POWER PLANT CONSTRUCTION, TO PROVIDE FOR COORDINATED HEARINGS AND ISSUANCE OF PERMITS ON APPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY ASSOCIATED WITH POWER PLANT CONSTRUCTION, TO PROVIDE FOR CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN OVERHEAD TRANSMISSION LINES, TO DEFINE THE TERM "CONSTRUCTION," TO ENTITLE THE SECRETARY OF NATURAL RESOURCES TO JUDICIAL REVIEW, AND GENERALLY RELATING TO POWER PLANT SITING.

WHEREAS, The General Assembly of Maryland recognizes that electric power generation and distribution makes use of our environmental trust, including air, land and water and that the citizens of Maryland and other states benefit from the production of electric energy in Maryland. ~~It is also clear that~~ AND FURTHER RECOGNIZES THAT the electric companies (as defined in Article 78 of the Annotated Code of Maryland), as holders of public service franchises serving the public's interest, must bear, with other industries and governmental agencies at all levels, a shared responsibility with the citizen in the protection of the public environmental trust; and

WHEREAS, For these several reasons, it is the intent of the Maryland General Assembly to involve the human, institutional and financial resources of the private sector and Local, State and Federal Government in a long-range, stably-funded, well-designed electric power plant environmental research program to protect the quality of the State's environment, including the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary waters, while also satisfying the electric energy needs of people and industry; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of the Maryland General Assembly to insure orderly governmental process without requiring the citizens of Maryland to pay excessive costs, either as taxpayers or as consumers; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That new Sections 763 through 768, inclusive, be and they are hereby added to Article 66C of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1970 Replacement Volume), title "Natural Resources," subtitle "In General," subheading "Department of Natural Resources," to follow immediately after Section 762 thereof, and to be under the new subtitle "Power Plant Siting"; that new Section 5A be and it is hereby added to said Article and title, to follow immediately after Section 5 thereof; that Section 726 of said Article and title, be and it is hereby repealed and re-enacted, with amendments; that Section 11 of Article 96A of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1964 Replacement Volume), title "Water Resources," subtitle "Appropriation of Waters; Reservoirs and Dams," subheading "~~Illegal Appropriation of State Waters,~~" be and it is hereby repealed and re-enacted, with amendments; and that Section 54A of Article 78 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1969 Replacement Volume), title "Public Serv-