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March 3, 2020

The Honorable Dereck E. Davis
Room 231, House Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: **SUPPORT** Senate Bill 540 / House Bill 999 – Member-Regulated Cooperatives – Establishment (Rural Broadband for the Eastern Shore Act of 2020)

Dear Chairman Davis:

As a Queen Anne's County resident, homeowner, and 30-year Choptank Electric Cooperative member I support Senate Bill 540 / House Bill 999 - Member-Regulated Cooperatives – Establishment (Rural Broadband for the Eastern Shore Act of 2020). This legislation affords Choptank to utilize existing infrastructure and staff, to provide and expand broadband access in Rural Maryland.

I have provided bookkeeping services for small businesses and farmers for the past 14 years and it is vitally important to have consistent, reliable, and affordable internet access. State and federal taxes are required to be submitted electronically, banking and ordering supplies are performed online. Lack of quality internet access is very detrimental to these businesses. I have visited several wineries and farm-based businesses that are unable to accept credit cards due to this issue.

In northern Queen Anne's County, we have limited choice for internet access and current providers have no incentive to improve or maintain service quality and control cost.

Residents shop, access education opportunities, and health care all online. This legislation would improve the quality of life on Maryland's Eastern Shore. I share my support of the Rural Broadband for the Eastern Shore Act of 2020.

Thank you for your time consideration.

Sincerely,



Jamie L. Williams

cc: Delegate Jay A. Jacobs
Delegate Steven J. Arentz
Delegate Jefferson L. Ghrist