



Delegate Dereck, E. Davis
Room 231
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 999, Member-Regulated Cooperatives- Establishment (Rural Broadband for the Eastern Shore Act of 2020)

February 13, 2020

Dear Delegate Davis:

The Mid-Shore Board of REALTORS feels that access to reliable and affordable high-speed internet is a necessity in our modern society. The lack of Broadband in our rural areas adversely affects communication in our homes and businesses. It also impedes production in our farming and business communities. Our students are prevented from receiving even basic education. The lack of modern communication puts the health and safety of rural residents at risk.

Without this vital means of interaction and information, our rural neighborhoods are increasingly becoming undesirable. As licensed practitioners, we have become accustomed to buyers being unwilling to purchase homes that do not have this basic service. Property values are decreasing as our buyers are unwilling to forgo this essential need and are shying away from these areas. In this modern age, access to the internet has become an essential requirement.

The Mid-Shore Board of REALTORS supports Choptank Electric Cooperative's efforts to bring high-speed broadband internet access to these outlying, underserved areas on the Eastern Shore.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Germain-Dinges

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President, Mid-Shore Board of REALTORS

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