



TO: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
FROM: Garrett County Chamber of Commerce
DATE: March 1, 2023
RE: **SUPPORT SENATE BILL 547** – Broadband Expansion Incentive Act of 2023

The Garrett County Chamber of Commerce is the largest professional business association in Garrett County with nearly 500 members representing every industry in the region. The Chamber was formed to organize, support, and represent Garrett County's business community in advancing common interests and promote our county's hospitality and recreation industries by attracting visitors through comprehensive marketing.

As introduced, Senate Bill 547 creates a five-year moratorium on the sales and use tax for broadband infrastructure equipment. It also ends state taxation of federal broadband grants, maximizing taxpayer investment in these critical infrastructure projects.

SB 547 will bridge the digital divide and ensure that Maryland businesses and communities are positioned to take advantage of this necessary technology. Maryland employers, schools, community service organizations, and others must increasingly rely on digital access for everyday functions. As such, it is critical now more than ever that Maryland extend broadband access to everyone.

This legislation will put Maryland at the forefront of economic competitiveness, spur business activity across the state and provide jobs and stability. The Garrett County Chamber of Commerce values expanding broadband access and therefore respectfully requests a **favorable report** on **SB 547**.

