



Central Maryland Chamber
The Center of Intelligent Business

LEGISLATIVE POSITION: Favorable
House Bill 551
Broadband Expansion Incentive Act of 2023
House Ways and Means Committee
Thursday, February 16, 2023

Dear Chairwoman Atterbeary and Members of the Committee,

The Central Maryland Chamber of Commerce (CMC) was formed in 2017, a merger of two existing chambers- The Baltimore Washington Corridor Chamber (originally founded in 1948) and the West Anne Arundel County Chamber (originally founded in 1962). The CMC is a regional organization representing approximately 350 businesses in the Central Maryland corridor and exists to be the primary business resource and advocate as the area experiences exponential growth.

The Central Maryland Chamber is writing in support of **HB 551**.

As introduced, House Bill 551 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.

HB 551 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.

Broadband should be available to all and should also be affordable and easily accessible to give all Maryland residents equal access to necessary news and information.

This legislation will put Maryland at the forefront of economic competitiveness, spur business activity across the state and provide jobs and stability. The Central Maryland Chamber of Commerce values expanding broadband access and therefore respectfully requests a **favorable report** on **HB 551**.

Sincerely,

President & CEO,
Central Maryland Chamber of Commerce