

February 14, 2023

The Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair
House Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building, Room 131
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB0551 – Broadband Expansion Incentive Act of 2023

Dear Chairwoman Atterbeary:

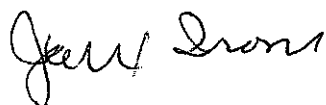
The Allegany County Chamber of Commerce respectfully urges your **support of HB0551 – Broadband Expansion Incentive Act of 2023.**

Full deployment of broadband would allow for tremendous strides in closing the gap on digital equity. A moratorium on sales and use tax for broadband infrastructure is vital to Allegany County where we have areas of the community which still lack access.

During the crisis of 2020, which shifted every student in Allegany County to attend school virtually, there were hundreds of households in the far eastern and far western parts of the county who had to drive to school parking lots to learn from their cars by connecting to the school Wi-Fi. Our own Chamber had staff who found times in which they had to drive to an area where Wi-Fi could be accessed from their car to complete certain tasks. As the need for high-speed internet continues to increase for personal, professional, and educational purposes, this is an excellent opportunity to capitalize on the federal dollars focused on addressing this issue.

Thank you for considering a **favorable report for HB0551.**

Sincerely,



Jeremy G. Irons
Legislative Committee Chairman



Juli R. McCoy
Executive Director

cc: Honorable Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Vice Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
House Ways and Means Committee Members
Allegany County Delegation