

HOUSE BILL 1242

C5, M3, C8

4lr3334

By: **Delegate Ruth**

Introduced and read first time: February 8, 2024

Assigned to: Economic Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Utilities – Lead Telecommunications Cables – Regulations and Report**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing the Department of the Environment to adopt certain
4 regulations related to lead telecommunications cables; requiring a company that
5 applied for a grant through the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment
6 (BEAD) Program to submit a certain report on or before a certain date; and generally
7 relating to lead telecommunications cables.

8 BY adding to

9 Article – Public Utilities

10 Section 5–503

11 Annotated Code of Maryland

12 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
14 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

15 **Article – Public Utilities**

16 **5–503.**

17 **THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS**
18 **REGARDING TESTING AND REMEDIATION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS CABLES**
19 **CONTAINING LEAD.**

20 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

21 (a) In this section, “BEAD Program” means the federal Broadband Equity, Access,
22 and Deployment Program.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (b) On or before October 1, 2024, a company that applied for a grant under the
2 BEAD Program shall submit a report to the Department of the Environment, the Office of
3 Statewide Broadband in the Department of Housing and Community Development, and, in
4 accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly that
5 details:

6 (1) the approximate location and extent of any known telecommunications
7 cables containing lead that are owned or controlled by the company in the State and
8 whether the cables are currently used for transmission, including:

9 (i) aerial telecommunications cables;

10 (ii) ground telecommunications cables; and

11 (iii) water-based telecommunications cables;

12 (2) an assessment of the risks of the cables to public health due to lead
13 contamination of soil or water;

14 (3) an assessment of the risks and challenges of the removal of the cables;
15 and

16 (4) an assessment of the economics of removal or remediation
17 simultaneously with the deployment of high-speed networks in areas where the location of
18 the cables overlap with unserved or underserved areas eligible for BEAD Program funding.

19 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
20 1, 2024.