

SENATE BILL 968

P1

8lr2641
CF HB 243

By: **Senator Eckardt**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2018

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force on Rural Internet, Broadband, Wireless, and Cellular Service –**
3 **Study and Extension**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Task Force on Rural Internet, Broadband, Wireless, and
5 Cellular Service, in conducting a certain study, to solicit input from certain entities;
6 expanding the scope of a certain study; extending the date by which the Task Force
7 must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General
8 Assembly; extending the termination date of the Task Force; and generally relating
9 to the Task Force on Rural Internet, Broadband, Wireless, and Cellular Service.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
11 Chapter 620 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2017
12 Section 1(f) and (g) and 2

13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
14 Chapter 621 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2017
15 Section 1(f) and (g) and 2

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

18 **Chapter 620 of the Acts of 2017**

19 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
20 That:

21 (f) (1) **(I)** The Task Force shall study and make recommendations
22 regarding how Western Maryland counties, Southern Maryland counties, Eastern Shore
23 counties, and Frederick, Carroll, and Harford counties can work together to obtain federal
24 assistance to improve Internet, Broadband, wireless, and cellular services and accessibility

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 in Western Maryland, in Southern Maryland, on the Eastern Shore, and in Frederick,
2 Carroll, and Harford counties.

3 **(II) IN CONDUCTING THE STUDY REQUIRED UNDER**
4 **SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE TASK FORCE SHALL SOLICIT INPUT**
5 **FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS, AND WIRELESS**
6 **SERVICE PROVIDERS ON IDENTIFYING UNSERVED AND UNDERSERVED AREAS IN**
7 **WESTERN MARYLAND COUNTIES, SOUTHERN MARYLAND COUNTIES, EASTERN**
8 **SHORE COUNTIES, AND FREDERICK, CARROLL, AND HARFORD COUNTIES.**

9 (2) In accordance with paragraph (3) of this subsection, the study required
10 under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall:

11 (i) assess current Internet, Broadband, wireless, cellular, and
12 landline service connectivity;

13 (ii) assess coverage for the users located at the end of the:

14 1. Internet service connectivity;

15 2. Broadband service connectivity;

16 3. wireless service connectivity;

17 4. cellular service connectivity; and

18 5. landline service connectivity;

19 (iii) evaluate redundancies and gaps in the current Internet,
20 Broadband, wireless, cellular, and landline service connectivity; [and]

21 (iv) evaluate any federal funds applied for in response to any
22 previous Broadband task force in the State; AND

23 **(V) EXAMINE HOW TO ACCESS MAPS SUFFICIENT TO:**

24 **1. EDUCATE THE PUBLIC; AND**

25 **2. CALCULATE COSTS FOR UNIVERSAL LAST-MILE**
26 **BROADBAND COVERAGE.**

27 (3) The study required under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be
28 based on publicly available and nonconfidential information.

29 (g) On or before November 30, [2017] **2018**, the Task Force shall report its
30 findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the

1 State Government Article, the General Assembly.

2 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
3 1, 2017. It shall remain effective for a period of [1 year] **2 YEARS** and, at the end of May
4 31, [2018] **2019**, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall
5 be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

6 **Chapter 621 of the Acts of 2017**

7 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
8 That:

9 (f) (1) **(I)** The Task Force shall study and make recommendations
10 regarding how Western Maryland counties, Southern Maryland counties, Eastern Shore
11 counties, and Frederick, Carroll, and Harford counties can work together to obtain federal
12 assistance to improve Internet, Broadband, wireless, and cellular services and accessibility
13 in Western Maryland, in Southern Maryland, on the Eastern Shore, and in Frederick,
14 Carroll, and Harford counties.

15 **(II) IN CONDUCTING THE STUDY REQUIRED UNDER**
16 **SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE TASK FORCE SHALL SOLICIT INPUT**
17 **FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS, AND WIRELESS**
18 **SERVICE PROVIDERS ON IDENTIFYING UNSERVED AND UNDERSERVED AREAS IN**
19 **WESTERN MARYLAND COUNTIES, SOUTHERN MARYLAND COUNTIES, EASTERN**
20 **SHORE COUNTIES, AND FREDERICK, CARROLL, AND HARFORD COUNTIES.**

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22 under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall:

23 (i) assess current Internet, Broadband, wireless, cellular, and
24 landline service connectivity;

25 (ii) assess coverage for the users located at the end of the:

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28 3. wireless service connectivity;

29 4. cellular service connectivity; and

30 5. landline service connectivity;

31 (iii) evaluate redundancies and gaps in the current Internet,
32 Broadband, wireless, cellular, and landline service connectivity; [and]

1 (iv) evaluate any federal funds applied for in response to any
2 previous Broadband task force in the State; AND

3 (V) EXAMINE HOW TO ACCESS MAPS SUFFICIENT TO:

4 1. EDUCATE THE PUBLIC; AND

5 2. CALCULATE COSTS FOR UNIVERSAL LAST-MILE
6 BROADBAND COVERAGE.

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