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Patrick Moran - President

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**Testimony**  
**HB 43 – Department of Information Technology –**  
**Office of Broadband and Joint Committee on Broadband**  
**Support**

AFSCME Council 3 represents 30,000 State and Higher Education employees in Maryland. HB 43 establishes the Office of Broadband in the Department of Information Technology and draws from funding from the Rural Broadband Assistance Fund, and if authorized, by revenues collected from sports betting. Our members reside in every jurisdiction in Maryland, and the lack of access to quality and affordable broadband is an obstacle in both rural and urban areas. AFSCME Council 3 supports HB 43 because it works to address long-standing issues with access to broadband and widens current efforts to expand broadband from only rural areas to statewide.

Many of the services AFSCME Council 3 members provide in our state government and at public universities are now accessible over the internet. AFSCME Council 3 believes that our state has an obligation to ensure all Marylanders can access these important public services without barriers. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has also amplified the necessity of workers to have access to high-quality broadband in their homes. While teleworking, AFSCME Council 3 members have continued the vital work of processing unemployment claims, distributing SNAP benefits, assisting students with their enrollment questions, and monitoring domestic violence cases all while struggling to secure consistent access to quality internet.

AFSCME Council 3 asks for a favorable report on HB 43.

Every AFSCME Maryland State and University contract guarantees a right to union representation.  
An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.  
800.492.1996

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