



TO: The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
Members, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Members, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
The Honorable Sarah K. Elfreth

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
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DATE: February 9, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 66 – *Department of Housing and Community Development – Office of Digital Inclusion – Established (Digital Connectivity Act of 2021)*

The Maryland Tech Council (MTC) is a collaborative community, actively engaged in building stronger life science and technology companies by supporting the efforts of our individual members who are saving and improving lives through innovation. We support our member companies who are driving innovation through advocacy, education, workforce development, cost savings programs, and connecting entrepreneurial minds. The valuable resources we provide to our members help them reach their full potential making Maryland a global leader in the life sciences and technology industries. On behalf of MTC, we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 66.

Senate Bill 66 establishes the *Office of Digital Inclusion* in the Department of Housing and Community Development. This newly created Office is essentially the renaming of the current Office of Rural Broadband coupled with a comprehensive enhancement of the Office's goals, objectives, and responsibilities. The legislation reflects a recognition of the importance of working, not only with the rural jurisdictions, but across all jurisdictions in the State to provide Internet access and connectivity to all residents of the State. The legislation also mandates funding in the budget to ensure the Office has sufficient resources to meet its obligations and achieve the legislation's notable goals and objectives. MTC looks forward to working with the Office and other relevant agencies to enhance and expand broadband access across the State. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

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