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February 22, 2023

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
3 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: **Support- SB 408** - Income Tax - Subtraction Modification - Qualified Broadband Grants

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1938, Choptank Electric Cooperative is a not-for-profit organization that exists to provide reliable and cost-effective electricity. This service improves the quality of life for our 55,188 member-owners.

As a cooperative, Choptank Electric maintains a deep commitment to the communities it serves, which covers about two-thirds of Maryland's Eastern Shore. Economic development, especially in our rural areas, is necessary in providing additional resources to our schools and communities, and in improving the livelihood of all residents. Choptank Fiber, LLC is a wholly owned broadband subsidiary of Choptank Electric Cooperative. Choptank Fiber's goal is to install true Gigabit broadband with no data caps one community at a time until we serve all our underserved members on the Eastern Shore.

SB 408, seeks to bring economic vitality and utilize federal grant dollars to bridge the digital divide in Maryland. Cooperatives throughout the country, including Choptank, are committed to guaranteeing access to quality high-speed internet services. **SB 408** will ensure that broadband deployment reaches every corner of our state in a pertinent manner.

Choptank Electric Cooperative and its member-owners ask you to support **SB 408**.

Sincerely,

Matt Teffeau
Manager of Government Affairs and Economic Development
Choptank Electric Cooperative

Members First. Every Day.