



**SB528: Consumer Protection - Video Streaming Services –  
Loudness of Commercial Advertisements**

**Position: Favorable**

March 31, 2026

The Honorable Kris Valderrama, Chair  
Economic Matters Committee  
Room 230, House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
cc: Members, House Economic Matters

Chair Valderrama and Members of the Committee:

Economic Action Maryland Fund urges a favorable report on SB528, which would extend to streaming services the same restrictions on the volume level of commercials that television commercials are held to.

We are comfortable with the Senate Finance amendments, although we worry that the exclusion on page 3, lines 5-6, exempting any “website or application that does not make video programming available to consumers as its primary purpose” may be overly broad.

Per federal law, since 2010 television commercials have been prohibited from being louder than the show they accompany.<sup>1</sup> Overly loud commercials were deemed disruptive and an abusive commercial practice. Advertisers know that listeners may tune out during commercials, and raising the volume ensures that they cannot be ignored.

Unfortunately, enforcement of this federal law has been lax,<sup>2</sup> and the rise of streaming services since that time have created a loophole in this federal law. This is particularly concerning given the frequency with which listeners use earbuds to tune into streaming services. The increased volume of commercials and advertisements is no longer just a disturbance; it is dangerous if the volume of the commercial is overly loud.

Excessively loud commercials on streaming services can also be an abusive practice for the streaming service, which may be incentivized to increase the noise of ads as an incentive for listeners to subscribe to ad free plans. For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB985.

Sincerely, Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, Deputy Director

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/loud-commercials-tv>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.marketingbrew.com/stories/2022/07/11/streaming-ads-are-way-too-loud-who-s-going-to-fix-it>

*Economic Action (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) champions economic rights and housing justice through advocacy, research, consumer education, and direct service. Our 12,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.*