



House Environment and Transportation Committee

March 3, 2026

House Bill 1037 – *Public Service Commission – Broadband and Voice Over Internet Protocol Service – Oversight (Broadband Accountability and Affordability Act)*

POSITION: OPPOSE

The Maryland Tech Council (MTC), with over 800 members, is the State’s largest association of technology companies. Our vision is to propel Maryland to be the country’s number one innovation economy for life sciences and technology. MTC brings the State’s life sciences and technology communities into a single, united organization that empowers members to achieve their goals through advocacy, networking, and education. On behalf of MTC, we submit this letter of **opposition** to House Bill 1037.

This bill would expand the authority of the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) over broadband internet service and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone service. The bill requires the PSC to establish standards, collect data, and evaluate and enforce service quality and reliability for broadband and VoIP providers.

While the MTC supports affordability and efforts to improve broadband and VoIP accessibility for Maryland residents and businesses, we fear this bill will result in several unintended consequences. The proposed regulatory and compliance standards, including extensive reporting, audits, and remedial directives, threaten to impose substantial operational and administrative burdens on internet and VoIP services right on the heels of the negative economic impacts of the data and information technology services sales and use tax expansion last Session. The bill injects regulatory uncertainty that could deter continued infrastructure investment in Maryland, complicate business planning, and thus slow broadband expansion at the expense of Maryland customers.

Marylanders currently have a choice of internet providers, including fiber, cable, fixed wireless, and satellite. This means that Maryland already has a competitive marketplace, incentivizing providers to maintain high service quality and network resilience to retain and attract customers. For this reason, we believe that the “service quality standards” in the bill are unnecessarily onerous and duplicative of current market-based incentives. Additionally, we know that providers operate across multiple states. Our experience is that infrastructure investment tends to favor states with stable and predictable regulatory environments. Granting the PSC broad authority to mandate “remedial actions” and conduct audits creates a less hospitable environment for the private capital necessary to expand fiber. Additionally, including state-mandated requirements for backup power and “resilience standards” may inadvertently steer providers to rely on older technologies, thus slowing the adoption of newer, more efficient innovations.

The MTC views all policy proposals through a lens of economic competitiveness. For the reasons stated above, we are concerned that this legislation risks making Maryland less competitive for providing reliable and affordable high-speed internet and VoIP services. We respectfully request an **unfavorable** report on House Bill 1037.

For more information call:

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