



HB1037: Public Service Commission - Broadband and Voice Over Internet Protocol Service - Oversight (Broadband Accountability and Affordability Act)

Position: FAVORABLE

March 3, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401
Cc: Members of the Committee

Chair Korman and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

Economic Action Maryland Fund writes in strong support of HB1037 which will place broadband and voice over internet protocol (VOIP) service under the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission (PSC).

In 2023, Economic Action Maryland Fund released our report [Digital Equity and Justice in Maryland: Opportunities and Challenges](#) which included stakeholder interviews and focus groups in Central and rural Maryland. Several challenges to digital equity were identified including affordability, reliability, and digital literacy. These were seen as challenges in both urban and rural areas.

Older adults, children and adults with disabilities were identified as particularly vulnerable to digital inequities and specific resolutions to their unique challenges must be part of any solutions to address the digital divide.

In particular, residents of both Kent County and Baltimore City faced challenges related to broadband reliability. Today, access to broadband is critical in order to engage in public life, shop, connect with government and friends and loved ones. It is a necessity, not a luxury.

HB1037 gives the PSC oversight of broadband and VOIP service and enables the PSC to write regulations related to affordability, reliability, as well as to require new reports from providers including emergency management. Enabling PSC oversight of providers and requiring new reporting increases transparency, provides clear authority, and establishes proceedings which the public can participate in.

For all these reasons, we support SB605 and urge a favorable report.

Best,

Marceline White
Executive Director

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.

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