



TESTIMONY

SB0782 – Telecommunications Infrastructure – Protections

Bill Sponsor: Senator Jackson

Committee: Senate Finance

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, CoChair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in support of **SB0782** on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. We are an association of unpaid citizen advocates—individuals and grassroots groups in every district across the state—representing and supporting more than 30,000 Marylanders.

SB0782 responds to real and growing threats to Maryland’s telecommunications networks, which have been increasingly disrupted by vandalism, theft, sabotage, and accidental damage. These incidents can shut down broadband, phone service, and even 911 access, leaving entire communities without essential communication.

Stolen telecommunications components—especially copper wiring, fiber housings, and metal equipment—are often sold through scrap and salvage markets. By requiring junk dealers to verify the source of these materials and prohibiting the purchase of items that appear to be taken from telecommunications facilities, the bill cuts off a major incentive for theft. When there is no easy resale market, the likelihood of infrastructure being targeted drops significantly.

By reinforcing the status of telecommunications systems as essential infrastructure, SB0782 strengthens public safety and supports the uninterrupted communication that first responders, hospitals, schools, and families depend on every day.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a **FAVORABLE** report on SB0782.