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February 28, 2023

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

RE: SB 547 - Broadband Expansion Incentive Act of 2023

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of TechNet's member companies, I respectfully submit this letter of support on SB 547, the Broadband Expansion Incentive Act of 2023.

TechNet is the national, bipartisan network of technology CEOs and senior executives that promotes the growth of the innovation economy by advocating a targeted policy agenda at the federal and 50-state level. TechNet's diverse membership includes dynamic American businesses ranging from startups to the most iconic companies on the planet and represents over five million employees and countless customers in the fields of information technology, e-commerce, the sharing and gig economies, advanced energy, cybersecurity, venture capital, and finance. TechNet has offices in Austin, Boston, Chicago, Denver, Harrisburg, Olympia, Sacramento, Silicon Valley, and Washington, D.C.

The internet is a key tool for consumers' access to information and empowerment. Internet access connects consumers with the tools they need to live a more flexible lifestyle, increasing their access to telehealth, remote education, civic engagement, provision of government services, and allowing for workplace flexibility. Embracing policies that close the digital divide and expand access to the internet and technology, provide a safe and secure consumer experience, and promote strong private sector competition and investment is a core value of TechNet. TechNet will support efforts to increase and expand high speed broadband deployment to currently unserved areas and increase adoption by encouraging private investment and making government funding competitively available to all providers for those hard-to-serve areas where private investment on its own is not sufficient.

TechNet supports tax policies that promote innovation and foster an economic climate that enables companies to compete, thrive, invest, and expand in all states. By exempting network equipment from the sales and use tax, broadband deployment will continue to flourish and ultimately benefit all citizens of Maryland.

TechNet appreciates your consideration of this important issue and supports the bill in its current form. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Margaret Durkin

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