

A solid portion of our members live in Maryland and may have family members who would benefit from the provisions as recommended in the write up below. Please take time to read and email this letter below. We encourage you to share it with your Maryland family and friends, as well.

CWA has been advocating to have additional labor standards added to Maryland's Broadband Buildout plan for over a year. Last week, 11/1, the state released their plan without including any of these standards. We have an opportunity over the next 2 weeks to flood the Office of Statewide Broadband with emails as to why these standards need to appear in their final draft.

Below is some suggested verbiage you can use to send an email. Please submit it by Wednesday, 11/22/23. Please format your email with the subject line provided and address the email to the individual listed. Thanks in advance.

1). When sending email-please make sure SUBJECT LINE of email states this:

PUBLIC COMMENT-MD BEAD INITIAL DRAFT PROPOSAL VOL.II

2). ADDRESS EMAIL TO:

ATTN: KENRICK GORDON-OFC OF STATEWIDE BROADBAND and SEND IT TO:

osb.bead@maryland.gov

3). USE THE SUGGESTED VERBIAGE BELOW (COPY AND PASTE TO YOUR EMAIL):

ATTN: KENRICK GORDON, OFFICE OF STATEWIDE BROADBAND:

Last week the Office of Statewide Broadband released Maryland's draft Initial Proposal for the Broadband, Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program. Maryland is slated to receive approximately \$267 million in federal funds under this program. I was disappointed to see that more labor standards were not included in the plan.

I am advocating that the following standards be included in Maryland's plan so that our state is positioned to build a high speed, reliable network that is sustainable:

-Use a directly employed workforce, as opposed to a subcontracted workforce.

-Hire locally and do targeted hires-a high percentage of the workforce should reside in Maryland. Funding should be used to grow jobs in our state.

-Safety and Training-a comprehensive in-house training program that is tied to certifications, licenses, titles, and uniform wage scales and/or participation in a joint labor-management apprenticeship program should exist.

-Job Quality: Applicants should pay higher wages and more robust benefits to workers. Applicants giving additional workforce protections such as union protections should get credit and if an Applicant uses a contracted workforce, be required to have a plan to monitor compliance and job quality.

-Ongoing Network Operations (Post Deployment): Plan to use locally based and/or directly employed workforce to perform ongoing customer service, installation and maintenance work.

When the final draft for Maryland is released, I hope to see these standards mandated for applicants applying for this federal BEAD funding. Governor Moore campaigned on "leave no one behind." Maryland has this unique opportunity now to close the digital divide. Including high road labor standards in Maryland's plan will allow for job growth; establish career paths; prevent unsafe build outs and truly deliver a high speed fiber network that all Marylanders, like myself, can benefit from.

Resources:

[Maryland BEAD Initial Proposal VOLUME II](#) (Pages 30-33, 56-58)

Provide your comments to osb.bead@maryland.gov or in writing by mail:

Attn: Kenrick Gordon

Office of Statewide Broadband

Department of Housing and Community Development

7800 Harkins Road, Lanham, MD 20706