ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY
MARYLAND

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
MATTHEW POWER

September 15, 2022

Hon. Gina M. Raimondo
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

Anne Arundel County, Maryland by this letter expresses its strong support for the application of Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) for funding for its Connected Community – Middle Mile project through the U.S. Department of Commerce / National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) "Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program" (Middle Mile Program).

Anne Arundel County is located in Central Maryland, just south of the City of Baltimore, and has a population approaching 600,000 residents. Most of the county's borders are defined by water. To the east lies the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay, and various rivers, creeks, streams and inlets the largest of these being the Magothy River. The County is home to a major International Airport, U.S. Military base and several hospitals. Anne Arundel County is consistently working to increase the resiliency of its infrastructure and access to all services to improve the life of its constituents.

Through its Middle Mile project, BGE will leverage its utility transmission corridors to deploy a fiber backbone across central Maryland, to both: (1) support reliability and resilience of its energy delivery system – enabling, in part, new clean energy technologies such as solar, electric vehicles and more; and to (2) improve affordability, access and resiliency of internet service for communities, anchor institutions, internet service providers and other data carriers – through both last mile community and institution partnerships as well as dark fiber leasing opportunities.

As a municipal and last mile connection partner through BGE's Middle Mile project, BGE's proposed middle mile fiber backbone aligns well with the existing County programs to harden the resiliency of the County infrastructure and to increase access and availability to disadvantaged and underserved areas of the County. We understand just how critical high-speed, reliable, and affordable internet is to the County, our residents and businesses in order to participate in today's job economy and build thriving livelihoods for themselves and their families. The County supports not just connectivity, but equity – to increase choice and increase

affordable options for high-speed broadband for the citizens we serve. The BGE Connected Community – Middle Mile project fully aligns with the County goals in this area.

BGE's Middle Mile project illustrates the strong potential for innovative, transformational public-private partnerships that can help local communities and institutions. Anne Arundel County urges the NTIA to approve BGE's application for funding, emphasizing that BGE's Middle Mile projects will benefit Anne Arundel County residents by improving affordability in our market; this program will reduce interconnection costs for last-mile providers and provide opportunities for competitive providers to offer last-mile service. It will also add critical resiliency into the County communication network. The County looks forward to continuing our partnership with BGE in an effort to make the vision of a more connected Maryland a reality.

Sincerely,

Matthew Power
Chief Administrative Officer
Anne Arundel County