

1 **..Title**

2 **The Digital Connectivity Act** - For the purpose of expressing support for the Maryland Digital
3 Connectivity Act.

4 **..Body**

5 **CITY COUNCIL OF THE**
6 **City of Annapolis**

7
8 **Resolution 8-21**

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10 **Introduced by: Mayor Buckley, Alderwoman Pindell Charles**
11 **Co-sponsored by: Alderman Schandelmeier, Alderwoman Tierney,**
12 **Alderwoman Finlayson**

13
14 **A RESOLUTION** concerning

15
16 **The Digital Connectivity Act**

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18 **FOR** the purpose of expressing support for the Maryland Digital Connectivity Act.

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20 **WHEREAS,** HB97 the “Digital Connectivity Act”, sponsored by Delegates Lierman, Attar,
21 Bridges, Henson, D Jones, Rosenberg and Smith - cross-filed with SB66 sponsored
22 by Senators Elfreth, Beidle, Edkardt, Griffith, Guzzone, Hester, Kelley, Patterson,
23 Rosapepe, West and Zucker, establishes the Office of Digital Inclusion (ODI)
24 within the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) as the
25 successor to the Office of Rural Broadband (ORB), with expanded responsibilities
26 and has an effective date of July 1, 2021; and

27
28 **WHEREAS,** in accord with the General Assembly, the Annapolis City Council recognizes “the
29 importance of the Internet as the most transformative technology of modern life, a
30 key stimulus for socioeconomic opportunity and development, and a prerequisite
31 for social and economic inclusion; and

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33 **WHEREAS,** high-quality broadband Internet service creates new jobs, attracts new industries,
34 expands markets for new and existing businesses, enables Marylanders to better
35 access educational opportunities and resources, facilitates delivery of health care
36 services, and protects public safety; and

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38 **WHEREAS,** increased deployment of broadband Internet services and infrastructure will
39 improve long-term quality of life for all Marylanders and will ensure that the State
40 remains economically competitive both locally and globally; and

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42 **WHEREAS,** Maryland is committed to enabling the development of a statewide digital
43 communications infrastructure through public investment, public-private
44 partnerships, and cooperatives to meet the growing demand for reliable, high-
45 speed, universal, and affordable broadband access in the key sectors of public
46 safety, education, health care, and transportation for all Marylanders; and

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2 WHEREAS, by advancing digital literacy and universal access among Marylanders, the State
3 will help eradicate the inequalities in adoption, knowledge, and skills needed to
4 effectively use and communicate through various digital platforms and tools,
5 ultimately enabling the skills and knowledge necessary for digitally inclusive
6 communities; and
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8 WHEREAS, a growing digital divide between Marylanders who have the ability and means to
9 use broadband Internet services and those who do not exacerbates preexisting
10 inequality in the State; and
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12 WHEREAS, The Governor established the Office of Rural Broadband in 2017 through Executive
13 Order, and the Office is doing important work to provide Internet access and
14 connectivity to certain residents in more rural parts of the State; and
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16 WHEREAS, there are Marylanders in every county of the State who are unable to adequately
17 use broadband Internet today, or who are unaware of the utility and benefits of
18 broadband Internet; and
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20 WHEREAS, it is necessary to establish an office that will work not only with rural jurisdictions
21 but with every county in the State”; and
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23 WHEREAS, the Annapolis City Council expresses its full support of HB97 and SB66 and
24 encourages the General Assembly of Maryland to adopt these Bills and establish
25 the Office of Digital Inclusion in the Maryland Department of Housing and
26 Community Development to ensure that every resident of the State is supported by
27 high-quality broadband Internet service at an affordable price, and has the tools
28 necessary to use and take advantage of the Internet.
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30 **NOW, THEREFORE,**

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32 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that the General Assembly of
33 Maryland has the full support of the Annapolis City Council in adopting HB97 and SB66 to
34 establish the Office of Digital Inclusion in the Maryland Department of Housing and Community
35 Development to ensure that every resident of the State is supported by high-quality broadband
36 Internet service at an affordable price, and has the tools necessary to use and take advantage of the
37 Internet.
38

39 **AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that the City
40 Clerk shall send a copy of this Resolution to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker
41 of the House of Delegates, and the Maryland Municipal League.
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43 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that this
44 resolution shall take effect from the date of its passage.
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EXPLANATION

Underlining indicates matter added.
[~~Strikethrough~~] indicates matter stricken.