

~~(2) IDENTIFY UNUSED CAPACITY IN EXISTING FACILITIES; AND~~

~~(3) PLAN THE OPTIMAL LOCATION OF POINTS OF PRESENCE IN EACH LATA IN THE STATE.~~

~~[(c)] (D) The network shall be accessible through direct connection and through local intra LATA telecommunications to State and local governments and public and private educational institutions in the State.~~

~~SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:~~

~~(a) On or before July 1, 2004, the Department of Business and Economic Development shall identify existing and significant potential demand for access to high speed telecommunication and data transmission services facilities in underserved rural areas of the State, in consultation with local government officials, existing businesses, and existing regional and local consortia and other groups involved with high technology economic development in those areas;~~

~~(b) On or before July 1, 2004, the Department of Budget and Management shall explore expansion of high speed telecommunication and data transmission capacity, including fiber optic cable and competing technologies, into underserved rural areas that have existing and significant potential demand for the capacity afforded by fiber optic cable and competing technologies associated with State and local economic development, by expansion of the State backbone and network under § 3-705 of the State Finance and Procurement Article, through other Net.Work.Maryland or successor initiatives, or through other public private cooperation with commercial providers of high speed telecommunication and data transmission services, and shall also explore alternative models for delivering these services in underserved rural areas;~~

~~(c) On or before January 1, 2005, the Department of Business and Economic Development, in consultation with the Department of Budget and Management, shall facilitate the expansion of high speed telecommunication and data transmission services and facilities into underserved rural areas of the State by matching existing and significant potential demand with private and public providers of these services and facilities; and~~

~~(d) On or before January 1, 2004, the Department of Business and Economic Development and the Department of Budget and Management shall report jointly, subject to § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly on their progress in complying with this section.~~

~~SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2003.~~

~~(a) There is a Task Force on Broadband Communications Deployment in Underserved Rural Areas.~~

~~(b) The Task Force consists of the following 20 members:~~