

(1995 Replacement Volume and 1997 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, In several areas of the country, notably in the Research Triangle of North Carolina, Palo Alto, California, and in the Commonwealth of Virginia, developments involving intensive high-speed computer networking are spurring both academic research and practical economic development; and

WHEREAS, In North Carolina and Palo Alto, investment in computing infrastructure, including connections capable of supporting data transmission in the gigabit-per-second range, are fostering public-private partnerships and technological developments at an accelerating rate; and

WHEREAS, In Virginia, the groundwork has been laid to do the same statewide, by imposition of a uniform data connection rate in telecommunication tariffs, regardless of the distance required to support the new NETWORK.VIRGINIA, styled as an advanced, broadband network delivering ATM (asynchronous transfer mode) service statewide, and providing gateways to high-speed federal networks, educational institutions, and the Internet; and

WHEREAS, In West Virginia, the private and public sectors, working in concert, are working to link all areas of the state with fiber-optic networks for use by businesses, schools, and government, to interconnect government agencies and provide compatible data sharing, and eliminate paper recordkeeping where feasible; and

WHEREAS, In Pennsylvania, the Commonwealth has initiated a Team Pennsylvania Business Resource Center and Business Resource Network to spur high-tech industries to locate and expand there, offering information and support, while colleges and universities are participating in the Internet 2 high-speed broad-bandwidth network development, and hospitals and health organizations are developing high-speed digital multimedia networks for teaching and health care; and

WHEREAS, In Delaware, high-speed networking is being developed to facilitate government agency functions and interconnection, as well as public school multimedia interactions and electronic commerce; and

WHEREAS, In Maryland, despite the individual achievements of a number of institutions of higher learning and resident federal agencies in developing substantial computing resources, the lack of high-speed networking capacity limits the ability of these entities and commercial ventures to interact, particularly in areas outside of the Baltimore-Washington corridor; and

WHEREAS, In the long term, to achieve the intensive development being experienced in North Carolina and Palo Alto, a much greater bandwidth in computer networking capacity will be needed - points of presence capable of handling data transmission in the million-bits-per-second range, known as gigaPOPs; and

WHEREAS, Maryland will be best served by building on its existing strengths - excellent academic institutions and large-scale federal agencies, several of which