



## **BREEZELINE PARTNERS WITH STATE AND LOCAL COUNTIES TO EXPAND BROADBAND REACH IN RURAL MARYLAND**

*Breezeline to extend broadband to more than 500 homes and business via  
\$4.6 million state and local funding initiative*

**QUINCY, MA, July 8, 2022** – Breezeline, the eighth-largest cable operator in the U.S., will partner with state and local officials in Maryland to extend the availability of broadband internet in Cecil, St. Mary's and Queen Anne's counties.

The partnership will extend broadband access to 524 homes and businesses in the three counties. The state will contribute \$3.68 million toward the \$4.3 million project, while Breezeline will contribute \$347,000 and the contributions from the three local counties will total \$309,000. The grant applications were submitted through the Maryland Network Infrastructure Grant Program and the state's Neighborhood Connect Broadband Funding Program, both of which are designed to help extend broadband services into previously unserved areas. The programs are funded and administered through Maryland's Office of Statewide Broadband.

Breezeline, in partnership with the St. Mary's County Board of Education, has also been awarded a separate \$339,000 grant from the Maryland Emergency Education Relief (MEER) grant program to help bring broadband to an additional 23 student households in Maryland that currently lack access to internet services. Administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) through the Office of Statewide Broadband (OSB), the MEER grant program is designed to provide relief to K-12 students and related school staff to close the gap for students who lack necessary internet access or the devices they need to connect to classrooms.

Once grant agreements are executed with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, walkout and design phases of the project will commence. The projects have an estimated completion date late 2023 (Cecil and St. Mary's) and summer 2024 (Queen Anne's).

"We are excited to partner with local county officials and the state to extend our broadband reach even further into these communities," said William T. Newborg, Director of Grants and Funding for Breezeline. "We look forward to bringing the performance and reliability of high speed broadband to these rural Maryland communities to support work-from-home, telemedicine, education and other vital needs."

"We are pleased to partner with Breezeline and the State of Maryland to address the connectivity needs of rural communities," said St. Mary's County Commissioner President Randy Guy. "St. Mary's County has undertaken a strategic approach to improving the county broadband infrastructure by leveraging available grants to bring broadband to otherwise hard-to-reach areas of our communities."

The three-county initiative in Maryland is one of multiple private-public broadband partnerships that Breezeline has pursued to expand the reach of broadband across its service areas. With support from the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (also known as the CARES Act), the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative, and other partnerships, Breezeline has completed additional expansion projects in Mathews, Caroline, Lancaster, Middlesex counties and King George counties in Virginia, St. Mary's and Queen Anne's counties in Maryland, and Wolfeboro, New Hampshire.

### **ABOUT BREEZELINE**

Cogeco US, operating as Breezeline, a subsidiary of Cogeco Communications Inc. (TSX: CCA), is the eighth-largest cable operator in the United States. The company provides its residential and business customers with Internet, TV and Voice services in 12 states: Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Maine, Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia. Cogeco Communications Inc. also operates in Québec and Ontario, in Canada, under the Cogeco Connexion name. Cogeco Inc.'s subsidiary, Cogeco Media, owns and operates 21 radio stations as well as a news agency serving audiences primarily in the province of Québec.

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