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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Governor Ehrlich Encourages Eastern Maryland Businesses and Organizations to Respond to Survey**

### *Survey is first phase of broadband deployment strategy*

Salisbury, Md. (May 21, 2003) – Governor Robert Ehrlich is asking all Eastern Shore Maryland-based businesses and organizations to participate in a survey that will be mailed to over 3,200 locations throughout the nine Eastern Shore Counties within the next 10 days. The survey is part of an in-depth project being conducted by TLA Associates on behalf of the counties of Kent, Cecil, and Queen Anne’s, the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore, the Mid-Shore Regional Council, the Maryland Department of Business and Economic (DBED), and the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO). Additional details about the project can be found at [www.marylandtedco.org/EasternMD.htm](http://www.marylandtedco.org/EasternMD.htm)

The focus of the confidential survey is to collect and analyze current and future market demand for broadband communications and determine specific investment requirements that will result in a more robust infrastructure for the region. The business surveys must be returned by **June 13, 2003**. Information will be held in the strictest confidence and neither business owners nor other organizations will be identified without their advance consent.

“In traveling around the Eastern Shore, I repeatedly hear from business people about the need for affordable broadband Internet access,” said Governor Ehrlich. “I recognize the importance of this vital infrastructure to the future of the Shore’s economy. My Administration is committed to working with local officials to solve this problem, but our first step for all Eastern Shore businesses is to complete this survey.”

Aris Melissaratos, secretary of DBED, said “The Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development seeks to enable businesses on the Eastern Shore to compete in a networked economy, where demand for broadband technologies are quantified and specific needs are addressed. We

look forward to reviewing the data and determine the next logical step for expanding broadband Internet connectivity in the region.”

The need for this study arose from TEDCO's *eReadiness Maryland* project and the final report that determined the Eastern Shore's private sector and households lag behind other areas of the state in their rate of broadband access and usage. The project seeks to resolve this lack of access by determining best practices for utilizing the region's existing assets and providing specific workable solutions to fill existing gaps and needs in the counties of the Eastern Shore.

“TEDCO's mission is to foster the development of a technology economy that will create and sustain businesses throughout all regions in the State of Maryland,” said Phillip Singerman, executive director of TEDCO. “In order to achieve this, we must ensure that all regions of the state have access to the best technology, and counties on the Eastern Shore can not lag behind other regions of the state if they are to compete.”

The Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore and the Mid-Shore Regional Council are leading this effort to find practical, market-driven solutions that complement existing assets, and moves the region forward.

**The Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO)** was established by the General Assembly as a tool for Maryland to use in maintaining and enhancing its reputation as a leader in technology. TEDCO's mission is to foster the development of a technology economy that will create and sustain businesses throughout all regions in the State of Maryland. Currently, TEDCO has programs that aid and promote state-funded incubators, federal and university laboratories to increase technology transfer and Maryland's eCommerce.

For more information on TEDCO visit its updated website that includes better access to programs and resources at [www.MarylandTEDCO.org](http://www.MarylandTEDCO.org).

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