



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

March 14, 2018

The Honorable Stacey Plaskett
U.S. House of Representatives
331 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Plaskett:

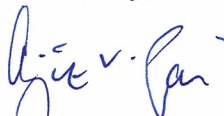
Thank you for your letter about continuing telecommunications network recovery efforts in the U.S. Virgin Islands following Hurricanes Irma and Maria. The hurricanes caused catastrophic damage to communications networks in the U.S. Virgin Islands and in Puerto Rico, and the Commission has made it a top priority to assist with the recovery from last year's devastating hurricanes.

As I saw just last week during my visits to St. Thomas and St. Croix, the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands are still recovering from last year's devastating storms. That means the FCC's work is far from over. That's why I've proposed a plan to my colleagues that would create a \$204 million Connect USVI Fund. It would deliver on that commitment and extend that vision even further. The plan supports both short-term, efficient restoration of service and the long-term improvement and expansion of broadband throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands. With the 2018 hurricane season less than three months away, we need to take bold and decisive action.

I should note this is not the only step the Commission has taken to promote public safety and connectivity in the wake of last year's hurricanes. In addition to providing public information on network outage conditions and sending staff to monitor and aid recovery efforts, the Commission offered Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands carriers nearly \$77 million in advanced universal service funding to help recovery, accelerated the post-incentive auction transition to support broadcasters, granted temporary waivers of Lifeline's recertification rules, expedited approval of experimental licenses for Alphabet's Project Loon to provide Internet access to residents, approved targeted and flexible E-Rate support to help restore connectivity of schools and libraries, and granted more than 200 waivers and requests for Special Temporary Authority to help re-establish communications in hurricane-affected areas.

I look forward to continuing to work with you on this matter. Please let me know how I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai

P.S. Congresswoman, I'm sorry that we missed each other during my recent trip to the USVI. But I was very impressed with the fortitude and resolve of those I met on St. Croix and St. Thomas. Looking forward to working with you as we enter the upcoming hurricane season.