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**For Immediate Release****FCC APPROVES \$950 MILLION TO HARDEN, IMPROVE, AND  
EXPAND BROADBAND NETWORKS IN PUERTO RICO AND U.S.  
VIRGIN ISLANDS*****Investment Will Boost High-Speed Internet Access on Islands***

WASHINGTON, September 26, 2019—The Federal Communications Commission today approved \$950 million in funding to improve, expand, and harden communications networks in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Two years ago, communications infrastructure on the islands was devastated by Hurricanes Irma and Maria. The FCC responded, among other steps, by creating the Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund and the Connect USVI Fund. To date, the FCC has provided about \$130 million in additional, one-time Universal Service Fund support to assist with network restoration. With restoration work substantially complete, the FCC today voted to approve the next stage of funding, which will provide mid- and long-term support to deploy fast, resilient, and reliable networks that will stand the test of time.

To accomplish these goals in Puerto Rico, the FCC voted to allocate more than \$500 million over ten years in fixed broadband support and more than \$250 million over three years in mobile broadband support. In the U.S. Virgin Islands, the FCC allocated more than \$180 million over ten years in support for fixed networks, and \$4 million over three years for mobile networks.

Fixed broadband support will be awarded through a competitive process, in which service providers will bid to serve every location in each covered area with up to gigabit speeds. Providers' applications will be scored based on objective criteria in three categories: price per location served, network performance (speed and latency), and network resiliency and redundancy. Support for mobile services will be awarded to providers that were offering mobile services in the Territories prior to the hurricanes in order to expand and harden 4G LTE networks and deploy next-generation 5G networks. These high-speed, storm-hardened fixed and mobile networks will ensure that every American living in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands is connected to digital opportunity and will have access to communications when they need it most.

Action by the Commission September 26, 2019 by Report and Order and Order on Reconsideration (FCC 19-95). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O'Rielly, Carr, and Starks approving. Commissioner Rosenworcel concurring. Chairman Pai, Commissioners O'Rielly, Carr, Rosenworcel, and Starks issuing separate statements.

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*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*