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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
May 18, 2020

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AND FOREIGN AGRICULTURE
SENIOR WHIP

The Honorable Ajit V. Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Uniendo a Puerto Rico and Connect USVI Fund
WC Docket No. 18-143
Waiver Request

Dear Chairman Pai:

I am writing to thank you for establishing the Uniendo a Puerto Rico and Connect USVI Fund. The substantial amount of funding to bring high-speed resilient broadband connectivity to the Virgin Islands has the potential to be transformative for our citizens.

It has come to my attention that a coalition of broadband providers in both the USVI and Puerto Rico have requested a waiver of the letter of credit rules that were adopted by the Commission last September for the Fund. The waiver request submitted by the group of potential applicants provides compelling reasons why the Commission should move forward to expeditiously grant the waiver request so that as many Virgin Islands broadband providers can apply for this much-needed funding.

During this unprecedented time where broadband connectivity has been shown to be essential to enable people to work and learn from home, directing more funds to deployment instead of to bank fees has a clear benefit to consumers and businesses that are already suffering from the effects of the 2017 hurricanes that decimated our infrastructure and economy.

Given the Commission's actions in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund and in light of the global health crisis that has compounded the economic crisis in the Virgin Islands, I ask that the Commission reexamine its requirements to better enable as many broadband companies as possible to participate.

Sincerely,

Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress

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