

ROBERT J. WITTMAN

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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

September 27, 2021

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Tamarah Holmes, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Broadband
Department of Housing and Community Development
600 East Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Director Holmes:

I am writing in support of the King William County FY 2022 Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) grant application to expand high-speed broadband availability in the First Congressional District through a partnership with All Points Broadband (APB). Approval of this application would help meet the critical need to buildout high-speed broadband service to residents of King William County.

Rural residents in Virginia's First Congressional District appreciate the value of high-speed broadband access. Providing reliable broadband access is vital for commercial stability, job creation, distance learning, and telehealth service expansion. Throughout the First Congressional District of Virginia, as in other largely rural areas, economic incentives are needed to expand broadband access, and the VATI program has been a successful vehicle of meeting that need. VATI encourages private telecommunications providers to enlarge their coverage and gives localities the ability to design the expansion that is right for their communities. This eases the financial burden associated with construction costs, broadens service, and creates a successful public-private partnership (P3) for the awardees and for the Commonwealth.

King William County has collaborated with APB to utilize state grant funds to amplify local and private funding. This application is resourcefully designed and embodies a first-rate use of state resources with a high rate of private leverage. The project will extend Fiber-to-the-Home infrastructure to 2,236 homes and businesses within the County. This project will include the remaining unserved locations within the County limits, thus, closing the digital divide for all residents. This proposed application will increase educational opportunities and economic growth in the county.

Thank you for your consideration of the King William County application. Moreover, if you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert J. Wittman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress