

**ROBERT J. WITTMAN**

1ST DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

**September 10, 2021**

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

Dear Dr. Holmes,

Please accept this letter as my strong support for Spotsylvania County's FY 2022 Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) grant application for the Berkeley and Livingston Districts. If awarded funding, the County will partner with DataStream, LLC, as the private sector broadband service provider, to deploy a 5G capable hybrid broadband system that will offer internet service to those areas that are currently unserved and underserved in the primarily rural districts of Berkeley and Livingston. DataStream will offer customers a variety of internet service packages ranging from 25/3 Mbps up to 200/20 Mbps.

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.

Funding of Spotsylvania County's proposed project will simultaneously further VATI's goal of creating strong, competitive communities throughout the Commonwealth by preparing those communities to build, utilize, and capitalize on telecommunications infrastructure while also significantly advancing the County's goal of extending affordable broadband internet service access to every resident in Spotsylvania County.

Thank you for your consideration of the Spotsylvania 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