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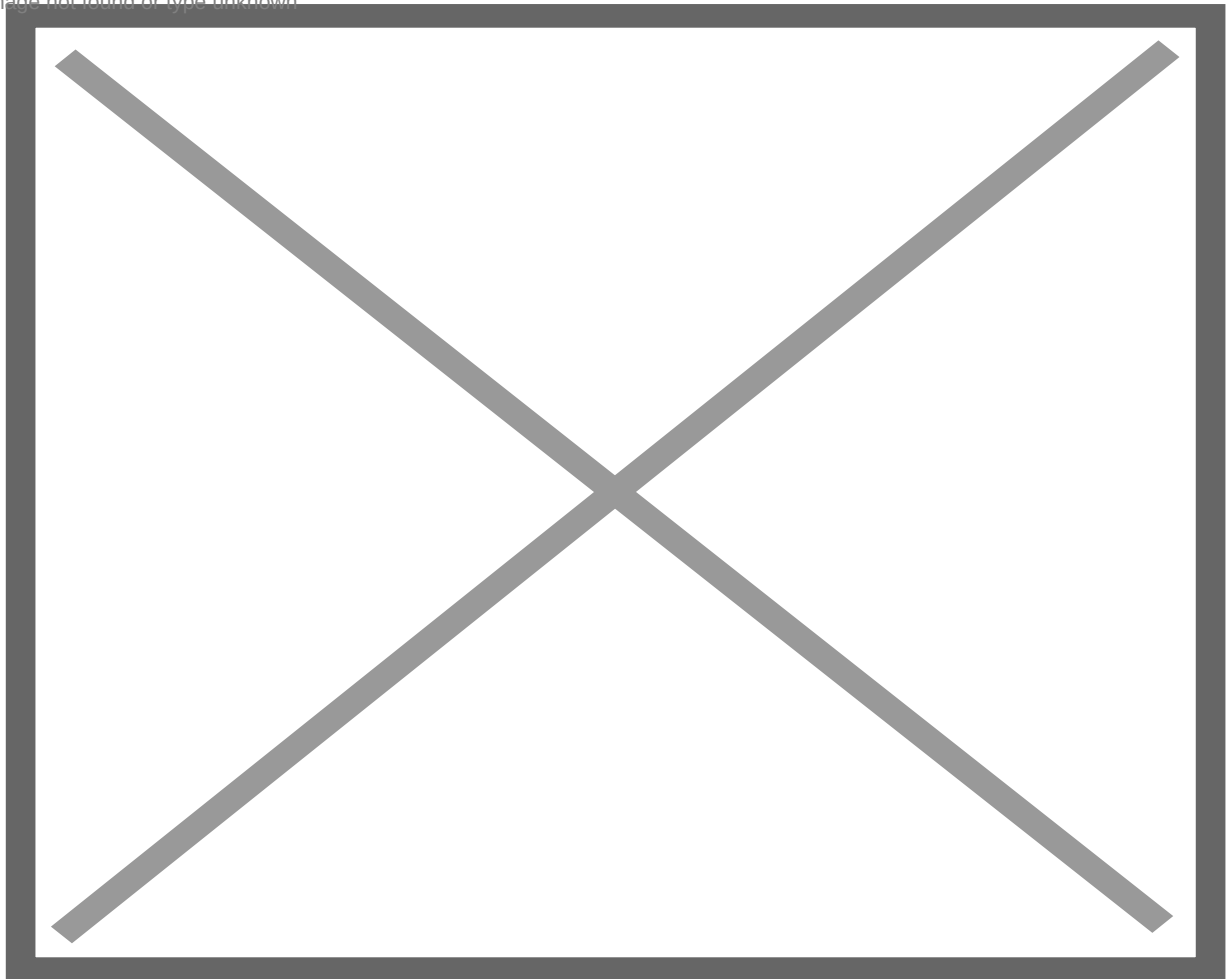
\$27 Million Allocated to USVI for High-Speed Internet Expansion

Federal BEAD program provides \$27 million to the territory to improve high-speed Internet access

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The territory is preparing to begin a process of mapping out the homes and businesses that lack a high-speed Internet connection, as part of an Internet for All initiative that aims to connect everyone in America to affordable, reliable high-speed internet service.

Under the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program, the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration allocated over \$27 million to the territory to realize the aims of Internet for All in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The locations and institutions eligible to be served by BEAD-funded networks will be determined through the identification process, which involves eligible challengers submitting information to support or oppose a particular location's designation as served, underserved, or unserved with high-speed Internet services.

The pool of funds would then be distributed via grant awards to Internet service providers, community co-operatives, and others who bid to build or upgrade Internet networks to connect the underserved and unserved locations.

The NTIA notes that individuals are not eligible to submit a challenge – eligible entities include nonprofits, Internet service providers, and units of local government. However, Virgin Islanders are encouraged to work with these entities to provide information about the status of their home or small business, so that they are accurately represented in the final eligibility map.

Local officials are expected to soon announce when they will begin accepting challenges and how people can participate.