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U.S. House Passes Bipartisan Bill to Study Trans-Atlantic Fiber Optic Cable Via U.S. Virgin Islands

House Bill H.R. 1737, co-sponsored by Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett, advances plans to study a trans-Atlantic fiber optic link connecting the U.S., Africa, and the Caribbean through the USVI, with the measure now heading to the Senate for review.

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The U.S. House of Representatives has passed H.R. 1737, the “DiasporaLink Act,” bipartisan legislation aimed at exploring the feasibility of building a trans-Atlantic fiber optic cable connecting the United States to Africa through the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Passed by voice vote, the measure would direct the U.S. Department of Commerce to conduct a study assessing the cost, value, and technological requirements of constructing a secure,

submarine communications cable from the U.S. East Coast to Nigeria and Ghana, via the Virgin Islands.

Congresswoman Stacey Plaskett, who co-sponsored the bill with Congressman Russ Fulcher of Idaho, welcomed the vote as a meaningful step toward establishing new economic and digital linkages between the U.S., Africa, and the Caribbean.

“I want to thank Congressman Fulcher for his continued bipartisan partnership on this effort, as well as Energy and Commerce Committee leaders—Ranking Member Frank Pallone and Chairman Brett Guthrie—for advancing this bill,” said Congresswoman Plaskett in a press release.

According to her office, the proposed initiative aims to support economic growth, national security, and secure data transmission, while helping to position the U.S. Virgin Islands as a central hub for trans-Atlantic communications infrastructure.

The bill passed the House Energy and Commerce Committee with unanimous support earlier this year and now moves to the U.S. Senate. Congresswoman Plaskett’s office confirmed that they are actively engaging with Senate members to secure final passage of the legislation.