

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Watch: As 2018 Hurricane Season Nears, FCC Chairman Seeks To Improve Broadband Service In USVI

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ST. CROIX -- Ajit Pai, the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, said during a press conference at Government House here on Friday that the need to upgrade the U.S. territories' broadband infrastructure is critical, especially as the 2018 hurricane season approaches.

The chairman expressed confidence that his [\\$954 million proposal](#) to both repair and expand telecom networks in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico would be adopted by the commission, stating that the issue had no apparent partisan politics that would

prevent it from being approved by the five FCC members, three of which are Republicans along with two Democrats. Mr. Pai told The Consortium that he expected approval to happen soon, again stressing the need to move fast because of the approaching hurricane season.

The chairman, who said that the FCC is barred by law from providing funding to broadcasters, nonetheless spoke of the important role that broadcasters, in the territory's case, radio, play during the hurricane season. He said the FCC would try to support that role through legal means, including granting Special Temporary Authority, "to allow [broadcasters] to continue to transmit even when their original facilities might go down or destroyed."

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