DECLARATION OF EVAN FEINMAN

1. I am over the age of 18, competent to offer testimony, and have personal knowledge of the facts in this Declaration.

2. I have served as the Governor’s Chief Broadband Advisor since July of 2018.

3. In this position I developed a plan to realize Governor Northam’s goal of universal broadband coverage prior to 2028, and oversee the inter-agency efforts to implement that plan.

4. The Commonwealth’s Broadband Effort, “Commonwealth Connect” is an inter-agency team consisting of staff from the Governor’s office, the Center for Innovative Technology, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, with ad-hoc assistance from many additional executive agencies. The Commonwealth Connect team partners with Virginia’s communities, utilities, and telecommunications providers to develop local and regional universal coverage plans, and to direct appropriated funds in support of those plans.
5. In order to fulfill the mission to extend broadband service to unserved areas, we researched both the flaws in the current federal reporting requirements and worked with federal, state, local, and provider data to determine good estimates for the nature and extent of broadband coverage as well as estimates of the numbers of citizens without access.

6. As a result of this work, we now know that there are hundreds of thousands of Virginians without residential access to broadband, and that many thousands of Virginians lack residential access to cellular service sufficient to engage in simultaneous video exchanges, such as FaceTime, Google Chat, to name a few.

7. Many of the unserved communities in which we work also contain a disproportionately high concentration of low-income Virginians. Many of these Virginian do not own, and lack the resources to own, the devices and subscriptions necessary to engage in video chatting even if their home could receive service.

Pursuant to 28 USC § 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on: April 30, 2020

Evan Feinman
Office of Governor Northam