



August 21, 2025

State Librarian's Excellence Award Committee
Library of Michigan
702 W. Kalamazoo St.
Lansing, MI 48915

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

On behalf of Mobile Beacon, I am pleased to submit this letter of support for the Van Buren District Library's application for the State Librarian's Excellence Award.

Mobile Beacon is a nonprofit organization that provides affordable, high-speed mobile broadband service to libraries, schools, and nonprofits across the country. Our mission is to help these institutions expand digital access and close gaps in connectivity. Today, we partner with over 1,800 libraries nationwide.

Within this network, Van Buren District Library has emerged as our largest and most impactful library partner in 2025. In the past three months alone, their hotspot program used 149,394 GB of data across 470 devices. For comparison, the average Mobile Beacon library partner used 3,430 GB over the same period, with a median of 1,532 GB. Van Buren's program is 43 times higher than the average and nearly 100 times higher than the median within our library network.

This accomplishment is about more than size. Each of Van Buren's devices averages 109 GB per month, showing that these hotspots are vital to residents who rely on them for education, workforce development, telehealth, and other essential services.

While Mobile Beacon is one of several providers supporting libraries nationwide, Van Buren District Library is the clear leader among our partners. Their program demonstrates what is possible when a library invests deeply in digital inclusion and puts equitable access at the center of its mission.

We are proud to support their nomination and recognize Van Buren District Library as a strong example of community leadership in action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe P. Gleason".

Joe Gleason
Director of Programs
Mobile Beacon

Van Buren District Library: Mobile Beacon's Leading Library Partner

Van Buren District Library (VBDL) has built one of the strongest hotspot lending programs in Mobile Beacon's national network, and in 2025 it stands as the largest and most impactful library partner. By fully embracing affordable community broadband, VBDL has created a program that delivers meaningful and measurable digital access to its patrons.

Benchmarking Within Mobile Beacon's National Network

Mobile Beacon currently partners with 1,801 public libraries across the United States. In total, these libraries have used 6.18 million gigabytes of data over the past three months. On average, a Mobile Beacon library partner used 3,430 GB in this timeframe, with the median usage at 1,532 GB.

Against this benchmark, VBDL stands out. Over the same three-month period, VBDL used 149,394 GB of data, which is 43 times the national average and nearly 100 times the median usage within Mobile Beacon's network.

Scale and Depth of Use

The success of VBDL's program reflects both reach and impact:

- 351 active hotspot devices deployed in the community
- Each device averaging 109 GB per month, well above typical per-device use

This shows the program is not only distributing devices but ensuring they are being used heavily by residents for online learning, workforce development, telehealth, and access to essential resources.

A Model of Community Leadership

While Mobile Beacon is one of several providers supporting libraries nationwide, Van Buren District Library is our top-performing library partner. Their results demonstrate what is possible when a library invests deeply in digital inclusion and puts equitable access at the center of its mission.

Summary: Van Buren District Library is Mobile Beacon's highest-impact library program in the first half of CY 2025 and a clear example of how libraries can expand opportunity and close gaps in digital access.