



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See *MCI v. FCC*, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER AJIT PAI OPPOSING FCC-INITIATED INCREASE IN RURAL AMERICANS' PHONE BILLS

Today the FCC announces a new “rate floor” of \$20.46 a month. What does that mean? Over a million customers in rural areas will face a rate hike of up to 46 percent in the next few months. This is bad news in tough times.

Why should the FCC saddle rural Americans with rate increases when doing so may not save the Universal Service Fund a dime and may in fact divert scarce funds away from broadband deployment? And why should the FCC override state-set rates to raise costs for consumers?

Right now, the economy is good for many people here in Washington, DC. But a recovery hasn't yet reached much of rural America. Let's not add to the challenges our fellow citizens face by increasing their phone bills. Instead, let's freeze the rate floor indefinitely and reexamine this misguided policy.