



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

April 3, 2017

The Honorable Bob Casey
United States Senate
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Casey:

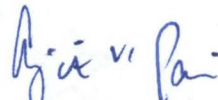
Thank you for your letter urging the Commission to adopt rules for the Connect American Fund (CAF) Phase II competitive bidding process that ensures an equitable allocation of funding for states such as Pennsylvania. One of my top priorities as Chairman is closing the digital divide for rural Americans who lack sufficient high-speed Internet access. I believe everyone should have digital opportunity, and I know there is virtually no limit to what Americans who are disconnected today could achieve tomorrow with robust connectivity.

That is why I asked my colleagues to vote on the CAF Phase II auction at our February 23 meeting, the first monthly meeting at which I could set the agenda as Chairman. That auction incorporates rules that my colleagues and I hammered out last year to induce new entrants to participate—competitive entrants like wireless Internet service providers, small-town cable operators, and electric utilities. And I was pleased that we adopted bidding weights that will encourage all technologies—no matter what technology they use—to compete in the auction.

Like you, I believe it would be unfair to rural Pennsylvanians to tie their opportunity for high-speed Internet access to the decision of a single company. That's why I worked with my colleagues in February to ensure that the citizens of every state that was promised new, better, faster broadband service by the FCC back in 2015 will see that funding come through to their state, either in this auction—which I hope takes place as soon as possible—or in the Remote Areas Fund that will follow on its heels.

I look forward to continue working with you as the Commission moves towards holding the CAF Phase II reverse auction. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai

P.S. Senator, thanks for weighing in. I hope our bipartisan effort will deliver better connectivity to folks in the Keystone State! I hope to work with you on this going forward.