

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

97

February 7, 2017

The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai:

We write to congratulate you on your new role as Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and commend your recent establishment of the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee. Providing the FCC with guidance on how to accelerate the deployment of high-speed internet access is a critical mission.

We have been advocating for increased rural broadband deployment for our constituents, but as you know, many rural Americans lack sufficient high-speed internet access. Thirty-nine percent of people living in rural America cannot access high-speed broadband at home compared with only four percent in urban areas. These communities are cut off from many of the innovative technologies that promise tremendous economic opportunity.

The FCC's efforts to close this digital divide in rural areas should be well defined with a targeted and clear goal. We therefore urge you to task the Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee to establish this goal and to define successful broadband deployment in rural America before moving on to more detailed policies. Without first setting a clearly defined goal, we would be concerned the Committee may miss an opportunity to comprehensively address this issue.

We look forward to hearing back from you on this issue and working with you on telecommunications policy issues, particularly those that impact rural America.

Sincerely,



PETER WELCH
Member of Congress



ANNA G. ESHOO
Member of Congress



DORIS O. MATSUI
Member of Congress



JERRY MCNERNEY
Member of Congress



DAVID LOEBBECK
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G.K. BUTTERFIELD
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