

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

SUBCOMMITTEES:
ENERGY AND POWER

COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

CO-CHAIR:
COALITION FOR AUTISM
RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS ON ROBOTICS



122

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

MIKE DOYLE
14TH DISTRICT, PENNSYLVANIA

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
239 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-2135

DISTRICT OFFICES:
2637 EAST CARSON STREET
PITTSBURGH, PA 15203
(412) 390-1499

11 DUFF ROAD
PENN HILLS, PA 15235
(412) 241-6055

627 LYSLE BOULEVARD
MCKEESPORT, PA 15132
(412) 664-4049

February 15, 2017

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

We write to urge you to reconsider your recent action to block the implementation of the Federal Communications Commission's Lifeline Modernization Order that makes internet access more affordable to struggling Americans.

As you know, broadband has become an essential part of modern life, providing a way for the unemployed to find jobs, for the sick to manage their healthcare, for families to connect with loved ones, for all citizens to engage with the government, and for student to access education. But for many struggling families, the only way to get access to these critical services is through the Lifeline program. The Lifeline Broadband Provider (LBP) process was created last year to lessen barriers to entry for new Lifeline broadband providers so that low-income families can benefit from a more competitive Lifeline market brought about by the new participants. At least one provider impacted by your decision already has customers benefiting from this new process, giving them the tool to connect with the outside world. But the FCC's action is putting this tool out of reach—and for existing customers, it is pulling it out of their hands.

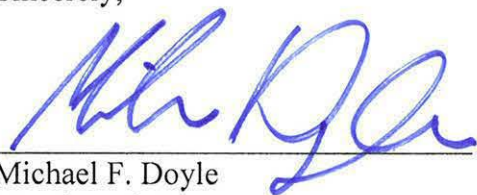
The FCC's order has prevented new entrants to the Lifeline market from immediately offering discounted service to the Americans who need it most. Moreover, this total reversal of existing FCC rules was done by the Wireline Bureau under delegated authority, without a vote by the full Commission or proper notice to the parties affected. Since the Order itself raises many novel questions of law and policy concerning the Commission's efforts to combat waste, fraud, and abuse in the Lifeline program, issuing the order through the Bureau not only undermines the ability of affected carriers to seek timely review of the decision, it is also an abuse of the FCC's process.

The reasons given for taking these actions do not seem to justify the extreme results. While the order states that the revocations are necessary to prevent further waste, fraud, and abuse, the order does not explain how its actions will accomplish those goals. Furthermore, since the Order raised many novel policy questions regarding the Commission's current efforts to safeguard the integrity of the Lifeline program, we find it troubling that the Chairman would insist on pursuing

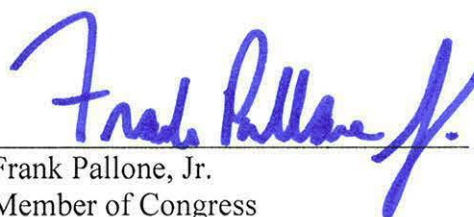
the same course he has so often criticized his predecessors for: an improper exercise of the FCC's delegated authority and a refusal to permit the full Commission from voting on an item that poses new questions of law and policy.

We always welcome any efforts to make such an important program more efficient and accountable. But these efforts do not need to come at the expense of the consumers who could benefit from it. We therefore urge you to immediately reinstate the LBP designations already made and to preserve the ability for new carriers to efficiently and responsibly enter the Lifeline market nationally. Moving forward, we welcome the opportunity to continue working with to strengthen, not dismantle, this important social safety net program.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Doyle
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



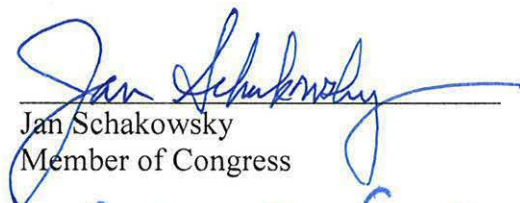
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



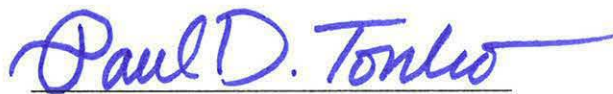
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress




Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



Ben Ray Lujan
Member of Congress



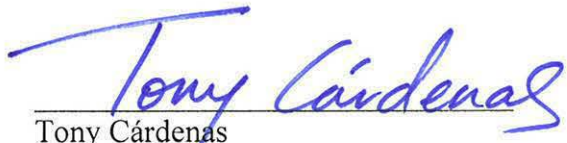
Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Gene Green
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress