



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

June 19, 2017

The Honorable Joe Manchin
United States Senate
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Manchin:

Thank you for your letter regarding the recently established Rural Broadband Auctions Task Force. The Task Force will oversee both the Mobility Fund Phase II and Connect American Fund Phase II auctions and ensure that rural areas are not left behind while urban and suburban America continue to see improvements in mobile and fixed broadband service.

The Task Force will help ensure that universal service funds are allocated efficiently for rural broadband deployment and that as many Americans as possible are able to get Internet access. As you note, making efficient use of these resources will require knowing where coverage does or does not exist. For this reason, in the Mobility Fund Phase II Report and Order the Commission asked for public comment on establishing a robust challenge process for determining the set of areas eligible for Mobility Fund support. The challenge process will ensure that funding is targeted to the areas that lack 4G LTE service or only have 4G LTE service due to universal service subsidies. At a minimum, parties will have the opportunity to review the Commission's coverage analysis and challenge initial determinations. Stakeholders have been coming forward with specific and constructive suggestions for how we should structure the challenge process. The Task Force and staff are reviewing these ideas, and I expect the Commission will be able to move forward on adopting the specifics of a robust challenge process soon.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai".

Ajit V. Pai



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

June 19, 2017

The Honorable Roger Wicker
United States Senate
555 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Wicker:

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