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Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20510

April 13, 2017

Received & Inspected  
APR 24 2017  
FCC Mail Room

The Honorable Ajit Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20536

Dear Chairman Pai:


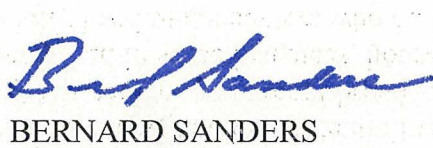

We write seeking information on the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) plan to ensure that consumers' access to local television broadcasting is not compromised in any way during the incentive broadcast auction process, including plans to communicate with consumers in a timely fashion about any impact on their viewing options.

Hearst Television Inc., the parent company of WNNE (NBC), voluntarily sold its rights back to the FCC in the recently completed reverse auction, potentially leaving a number of households in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts without broadcast NBC coverage. It is our understanding from the company that, in some instances, households could have no over the air broadcast service at all, potentially leaving consumers who do not have satellite or cable services without broadcast access to emergency alert systems, local news, and weather forecasts. In Vermont, Hearst estimates that 2,000 to 4,000 households could be impacted in Rutland and Windsor counties starting this fall.

As you may know, Tropical Storm Irene devastated Vermont in 2011, causing loss of life and significant damage to homes and businesses. Local news was an important source of information for Vermonters during and after the storm, keeping them informed throughout this natural disaster. It is critical that Vermonters continue to have access to broadcast services in the event of a similar crisis in the future.

We ask that you report to us on how the FCC will ensure that Vermonters impacted by this auction sale will continue to receive over the air broadcast service.

Sincerely,

		
PATRICK LEAHY United States Senator	BERNARD SANDERS United States Senator	PETER WELCH United States Congressman.