



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 18, 2017

The Honorable Jerry Moran
United States Senate
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Moran:

Thank you for your letter urging the Commission to move forward with connecting the most remote, hardest-to-reach places in rural America. Today, if you live in rural America, there's a better than 1-in-4 chance that you lack access to fixed high-speed broadband at home, compared to a 1-in-50 probability in our cities. That's unacceptable. Like you, I believe that all Americans should have the opportunity to participate in the digital economy—that's why bridging the digital divide is the FCC's top priority.

As you note, Americans in even the most remote areas of the nation should have access to comparable services and our rules should deliver the most value for the American taxpayer. That's why I was pleased to move forward with the bipartisan *CAF Phase II Auctions Order* earlier this year, which the Commission has now targeted to include extremely high-cost areas as well as the high-cost areas that were always part of the Connect America Fund. And that's why I was pleased that the Commission agreed to commence the Remote Areas Fund, which like the CAF Phase II Auction will employ technology-neutral rules, no later than one year after the commencement of the CAF Phase II auction.

Our agenda for the open meeting on August 3 will feature several items that will help bridge the digital divide, including a Public Notice to initiate the pre-auction process for the CAF Phase II auction. The CAF Phase II Auction will offer almost \$2 billion over the next ten years to broadband providers that commit to offer voice and broadband services to fixed locations in unserved high-cost areas in our country. With this Public Notice, we are seeking comment on the procedures to be used during this auction. Moving forward now will put us on track to conduct the auction in 2018.

I appreciate your interest in this matter and I look forward to continue working with you as the Commission moves towards bridging the digital divide for all Americans, even those in remote areas. 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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THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 18, 2017

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

Dear Senator Manchin:

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