



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

September 13, 2017

The Honorable Steve Daines  
United States Senate  
320 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Daines:

Thank you for your most recent letter discussing the importance of the Commission's Rural Healthcare (RHC) Program and following up on a previous letter.

As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand how connectivity can play a transformative role in the provision of medical care. I recall my father driving many miles at times to see patients. Having seen today how telemedicine is being used to improve the well-being of rural Americans, I support the RHC program. As Chairman, I will work to ensure it efficiently provides needed connectivity to rural health care providers.

Your letter references a previous response regarding the RHC program from former Chairman Wheeler and asks about the possibility of supporting wireless internal connections. That response cited a Petition for Rulemaking filed by the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition (SHLB) and six statewide and regional telehealth networks, including the Health Information Exchange of Montana. The Petition proposed a series of modifications to the RHC Program. While the issue of funding for internal connections was not raised in the record stemming from the petition for rulemaking referenced in former Chairman Wheeler's letter, please be assured that we will bear your points in mind as we assess how to proceed going forward with the RHC Program.

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