

**Media Contact:**

Mark Wigfield (202) 418-0253  
mark.wigfield@fcc.gov

**For Immediate Release**

**FCC TAKES KEY STEP TOWARD AUCTION TO EXPAND RURAL BROADBAND ACCESS**

WASHINGTON, December 19, 2017 – Continuing its push to expand access to broadband in rural America, the Federal Communications Commission today identified the locations of nearly 1 million homes and small businesses in 48 states that are eligible for up to \$2 billion in support for broadband deployment over the next decade.

Currently unserved by high speed Internet access, these locations are in largely rural areas, where, absent support, carriers are unlikely to expand service. Now, the FCC’s Connect America Fund is preparing to distribute up to \$2 billion in support to companies that successfully compete in an innovative auction to deploy robust broadband at the lowest cost in these unserved rural areas across the country.

“Closing the digital divide is my number one priority, and through this innovative Connect America Fund auction, we are poised to take the next big step in reaching that goal,” said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. “In rural America, broadband opens the doors of opportunity by connecting remote communities to global markets, jobs, education, health care and information.”

The auction seeks to expand service to census blocks unserved by broadband delivering speeds of 10 Mbps downloads/1 Mbps uploads. The auction’s use of competitive market forces maximizes the value the American people will receive from the Connect America Fund by balancing deployment of higher-quality services with cost efficiencies. The auction is set to launch in 2018.

Broadband access is essential in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century for jobs, education, information and economic development. Since 2011, the FCC has targeted over \$9 billion in support for rural broadband expansion to over 4 million homes and small businesses from its Connect America Fund.

Map showing locations eligible for support: <https://www.fcc.gov/maps/caf2-auction-final-areas>

Public Notice providing further details on auction:  
[https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DA-17-1219A1.docx](https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-17-1219A1.docx)

###

**Office of Media Relations: (202) 418-0500**  
**ASL Videophone: (844) 432-2275**  
**TTY: (888) 835-5322**  
**Twitter: @FCC**  
**[www.fcc.gov/office-media-relations](http://www.fcc.gov/office-media-relations)**

*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*