Universal Service
Administrative Co.

December 28, 2017

Via Electronic Mail

The Honorable Ajit V. Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20054

Re: USAC Board Oversight of Information Technology and Security

Dear Chairman Pai:

Thank you for taking the time to express your concerns regarding information technology and security issues facing the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC). As members of USAC's Board of Directors (Board) charged with oversight of the organization, we share your concerns.

While USAC is encouraged that its information technology systems delivered continual reliability and availability improvements for our universal service program participants and contributors in 2017, we agree with your assessment that USAC must redouble its efforts to ensure that we are adequately planning, coordinating, testing and reviewing our systems to ensure that they are functional, reliable and secure. To this end, we are delighted that you have accepted the Board's nomination of Radha Sekar as our next Chief Executive Officer. Radha brings extensive information technology experience – a key factor that the Board specifically recognized, among her many other assets, in recommending her appointment. Further, USAC is actively seeking a qualified Chief Information Officer and Chief Information Security Officer to augment our information technology and security management functions.

The Board is fully committed to strengthening oversight and delivery of timely, reliable and secure systems needed to fully administer all aspects of the Universal Service Fund. With regard to information security, the Board pledges that USAC, in collaboration with Federal Communications Commission staff, will ensure that every effort is made to deliver timely and effective compliance with all applicable rules and requirements, including, but not limited to the Federal Information System Management Act of 2002 (FISMA), on all existing and future projects. Going forward, security compliance will be incorporated into USAC's information systems development and design processes to avoid the kinds of pitfalls that historically beset the E-rate Productivity Center and contributed to the recent delay of the Lifeline National Verifier. Attached are specific actions that USAC is taking to address information security issues.

In conclusion, the Board fully recognizes the critical role of information technology and security in the execution of USAC's functions as the federal Universal Service Fund Administrator. The Board is unequivocally committed to fulfilling our oversight responsibilities and working with you and other partners to deliver secure and functional systems that ensure full and successful participation in the universal service programs.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian L. Talbott
Chair, Board of Directors
Universal Service Administrative Company

Attachment