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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC CHAIRMAN PAI ON COMMISSION EFFORTS TO BRIDGE THE  
DIGITAL DIVIDE IN TRIBAL AREAS**

WASHINGTON, February 2, 2018—Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai released the following statement regarding the status of the Commission’s efforts to expand broadband connectivity in Tribal communities:

“A few weeks after I became Chairman, in February 2017, I shared with my colleagues—including Commissioner Clyburn—an order that would increase federal funding for broadband infrastructure on Tribal lands. It explains that deployment on Tribal lands is difficult and that operational expenses are typically higher than on non-Tribal lands. We had three votes in favor of this item, and had those three votes for months.

“So what was the hold up? Despite having formally voted for the item, Commissioner Clyburn’s office had privately and repeatedly threatened to withdraw her critical third vote in favor of the order if we moved to bring this item across the finish line. It is worth noting that her threat had nothing to do with what is actually contained in the order. Then, this morning, she carried through on that threat and withdrew her critical third vote in favor of the order.

“If Commissioner Clyburn believes as I do that the Commission should take action to expand broadband access on Tribal lands, the way forward is simple. Instead of quietly changing her vote on a Friday morning and issuing a Friday afternoon press release designed to shift the blame, she should cast her vote in favor of an order that will increase federal funding for broadband infrastructure on Tribal lands. It’s that simple.”

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*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).*