

March 12, 2018

The Honorable Ajit Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554-0004

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Dear Chairman Pai:

I write today to inquire about the status of a petition filed by Gray Television Licensee, LLC to modify the television market of WYMT-TV for the purpose of it being carried by satellite television providers in its area.

As you know, local broadcasting plays an important role in communities across the nation. Not only does local broadcasting provide a medium to inform individuals about current events in their communities, it also provides the public with helpful information regarding matters of public safety. While we can all acknowledge that access to local news is important to communities, there are situations where individuals are unable to access their local broadcasting stations through their satellite television provider, due to constricting television market boundaries. In these instances, satellite customers, many of them in rural areas of the country, are oftentimes left to access news from broadcasting stations that may be located hundreds of miles away or in many cases, across state lines. Further, this limited access to local news disproportionately affects rural communities, as certain rural areas rely more on satellite than cable. To address these challenges, Congress passed the STELA Reauthorization Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-200), which gives the Commission the authority to modify a commercial broadcast television station's local television market for the satellite retransmission of broadcast signals. Within this authority, the Commission may grant a petition to modify a local television market, should the petition meet certain statutory factors, as described in P.L. 113-200. As you know, these factors, and the input of the community, are important to take into consideration as the Commission decides whether to grant a petition to modify a local television market, such as the one requested by WYMT-TV.

It is my understanding that WYMT-TV has petitioned the Commission to adjust the station's television market, with the goal of providing the people of Eastern Kentucky with easier access to local news that is more relevant to their communities. As always, I appreciate the Commission's commitment to the careful consideration of the matters before it. For this reason, it is my hope the Commission will continue this practice, give full and fair consideration of WYMT-TV's request, and take into account the viewpoints of those who shared their input on the petition through the open comment period.

Thank you in advance for your attention to WYMT-TV's request, and for providing my office with an update on the proceeding's status. I am appreciative of your leadership on rural communications matters, and I hope you will continue to keep rural communities in mind throughout your time as Chairman of the Commission.

Sincerely,



MITCH McCONNELL  
UNITED STATES SENATOR

MM/qs