

**REMARKS OF FCC CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI  
AT THE SUPPLIER DIVERSITY WORKSHOP**

**WASHINGTON, DC**

**JUNE 4, 2018**

Good morning. Here's hoping everyone had a great weekend.

First and foremost, I'd like to welcome everyone to the FCC. It's impressive to see all of you in attendance. I have to say, if we learned anything from Game 1 of the NBA Finals, it's that you have to know what the score is. And when it comes to diversity in the communications marketplace, we know that we still have some work to do to catch up. But judging from the talent in this room, it's pretty clear that we're on the right track.

Speaking of team sports, putting together today's event has truly been a team effort. Thank you to everyone who made it possible.

In particular, we have three co-sponsors: the FCC's Office of Communications Business Opportunities (OCBO), our Media Bureau and the Digital Empowerment and Inclusion Working Group of our Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment.

Thank you to the leaders of each of our co-sponsors: Sanford Williams of OCBO, Michelle Carey of our Media Bureau, and Heather Gate, who leads the working group. Let me add a shout-out to Rudy Brioche who chairs the working group's Access Subcommittee.

And an additional thank you to members of each of their respective teams. If I recognized everybody who worked to pull off this event, I'd use all my allotted time. But just know that I appreciate how much work went into organizing this event and I'm grateful to everyone here—and those who contributed but couldn't be here—who helped make this happen.

And given their extraordinary efforts as the FCC's lead staffers for the Diversity Advisory Committee, I have to commend Jamila-Bess Johnson and Brenda Villanueva, who have done a tremendous job.

Finally, thank you to all of our panelists who have volunteered your time to be here. Today's event is only possible because of your participation in these discussions and one-on-one consultations.

We have a remarkable turnout from industry, and for good reason. You get to interact with entrepreneurs who can deliver value for you, and who have been underrepresented in the communications space. This is a classic case of being able to do well by doing good.

Today's supplier diversity workshop is also personally gratifying for me. Allow me a minute to explain why. Last year, I announced that we were going to be re-establishing our Diversity Advisory Committee after it had been disbanded years earlier. This past September, the Committee met for the first time. At that meeting, I delivered opening remarks like I am now. One of my key messages was that the aim of this Committee wasn't a lot of talk. We expected action. We expected tangible results.

Today's event is a tangible result. The Committee held its second meeting this March, and one of the recommendations was to conduct a supplier diversity workshop. You took that recommendation, and you made it happen. And you made it happen fast. It takes a lot of busy people to pull together such a comprehensive workshop so quickly.

So here's my main message to you this morning: Now that I've seen what you can do, I'm adjusting my expectations. I'm raising the bar. I'm going to expect the Committee to work with FCC staff to make more real-world connections for small businesses, including those owned by women and

minorities. I'm going to expect more recommendations on policies and best practices. I'm going to expect recommendations on how to bring more diversity to Silicon Valley. And last, I expect that you will exceed my expectations, and collectively, that we will increase diversity throughout the communications industry and expand digital opportunity to more Americans.

Thanks again to everybody who got us here and will take us forward. Have a great day!