



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

May 16, 2018

The Honorable Joe Manchin
United States Senate
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Manchin:

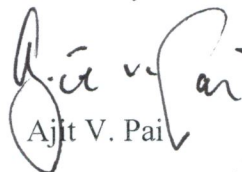
Thank you for your letter regarding the participation of state and local entities in the Mobility Fund II challenge process. I appreciate this opportunity to discuss the steps the Commission is taking to engage state and local entities in the challenge process.

Commission staff have conducted extensive outreach to governmental entities to make them aware of their opportunity to participate in the challenge process. In coordination with our Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Commission staff held a webinar on the challenge process for state, local, and tribal government entities on May 3, 2018. Commission staff will provide a free presentation on the challenge process on May 18, 2018 in South Charleston, West Virginia. Similar live, in-person outreach events have occurred in or are planned for New Mexico, Kansas, Maine, Washington, New Hampshire, and Mississippi. Additionally, Commission staff have been regularly interacting with state and local officials to support their involvement in the challenge process, promptly providing login credentials to governmental entities that have requested access to the challenge portal and answering questions on an ongoing basis.

The Commission has also taken concrete steps to reduce the burden on governmental entities that may be interested in submitting challenges. The Commission released a second map indicating areas that are not eligible because only one unsubsidized carrier claims to provide the requisite level of service. These are areas that are most likely to be successfully challenged, which means that this map enables governmental entities to more efficiently target areas ripe for challenge. In addition, the Commission increased the speed test buffer radius, effectively reducing the number of speed tests required for a successful challenge.

Like you, the Commission is focused on ensuring that our limited universal service funds are effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. This is a vital part of our strategy toward closing the wireless dimension of the digital divide. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai

P. S. Senator, thanks to you and Wes for working with us on these issues.