

Received & Inspected

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FCC Mailroom

January 29, 2018

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

We write to inquire about the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) decision to postpone the rollout of the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier (National Verifier). We have high expectations for the National Verifier to improve and streamline the Lifeline program. The timing of the Commission's announcement to delay implementation of the Verifier, however, troubles us.

As you are aware, Committee Members from both parties have requested periodic substantive updates on the progress of the National Verifier rollout over this past year. Despite your repeated public commitments to provide such updates, we have yet to receive any.¹ Instead, just five weeks after you testified that the Verifier's progress was on track,² you announced that it was in fact delayed.³

We are concerned that this delay was avoidable and that your inability to provide more accurate testimony may demonstrate a lack of adequate oversight of the process by the Commission. For instance, the Commission has blamed the delay on a lack of understanding of how to comply with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA). Yet, Members of this Committee stressed the importance of the Commission following FISMA last summer when the Commission

¹ House Committee on Energy and Commerce, *Hearing on Oversight and Reauthorization of the Federal Communications Commission*, 115th Cong. (July 25, 2017); House Committee on Energy and Commerce, *Hearing on Oversight of the Federal Communications Commission*, 115th Cong. (Oct. 25, 2017).

² *Id.*

³ Federal Communications Commission, *Wireline Competition Bureau Announces Postponement of Initial Launch Date of the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier*, WC Docket No. 11-42 (Dec. 1, 2018).

alleged it had suffered a DDoS attack.⁴ If the Commission had provided us the substantive updates we requested, the public may have learned of these problems earlier. The Commission's lack of diligence overseeing this important work has raised concerns that other issues still may yet to be identified.

To better understand what led to the Commission's decision to delay the National Verifier rollout and how the Commission plans to oversee the development going forward, I ask that you provide responses to the following requests:

1. Please provide a comprehensive list of proactive efforts you have taken as Chairman, if any, to ensure that the National Verifier is deployed on time in all U.S. states and territories.
2. Please provide a comprehensive list of what proactive efforts FCC staff have taken, if any, to ensure that the National Verifier is deployed on time in all U.S. states and territories.
3. Please provide the Commission's strategic plan to ensure that the National Verifier is deployed on time going forward.
4. Please provide a list of dated benchmarks detailing when the Commission plans to meet legal, practical, or deployment related goals for fully implementing the National Verifier on time in all U.S. states and territories.
5. Please provide the detailed status report on the Commission's efforts to deploy the National Verifier requested in July and again in October.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter, and request that you provide responses by no later than February 8, 2018. Please don't hesitate to contact my office with any questions.

Sincerely,



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone Jr.
Member of Congress

⁴ Letter from Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr., Ranking Member, House Committee on Energy and Commerce, Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, et. al., to Ajit V. Pai, Chairman, Federal Communications Commission, Mignon L. Clyburn, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission, and Michael O'Rielly, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission (June 26, 2017).



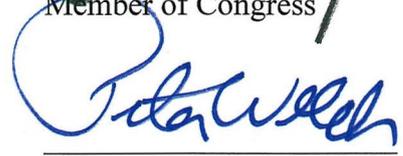
Mike Doyle
Member of Congress



G.K. Butterfield
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress