

FCC Mailroom

January 24, 2018

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

Dear Chairman Pai,

We are writing to urge you to grant the Application for Review and Request for Waiver filed with the Federal Communications Commission by the Pribilof, Alaska, School District.

The Pribilof School District serves 65 low-income kindergarten through grade 12 students on St. George and St. Paul Islands in the Bering Sea. This extremely isolated district lies approximately 300 miles from the west coast of Alaska, 250 miles north of the Aleutian Island chain, and 800 miles from Anchorage. Nearly 70 percent of the district's students live in poverty. The district consists of one K-12 school, (a K-10 school was closed this past August), and one public library that is located within the school and used by the general public after school hours. Because of Pribilof's isolated location, access to the Internet is critical for the district's students, teachers and residents. The Pribilof School District depends on federal E-Rate funds to allow its students access to the Internet.

In your letter to Senator Sullivan last May, you acknowledged that the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) IT system was seriously flawed and the Commission was working hard to improve the system. You stated you had directed USAC to "fix the E-Rate application process and take all steps needed to ensure that schools and libraries do not suffer" because of USAC's failed IT system.


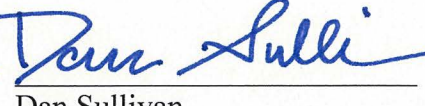
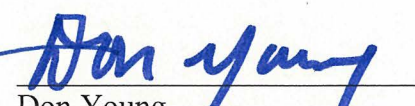
The Pribilof School District, however, has suffered because of flaws in that IT system, and the Commission has not yet moved to correct this injustice. It is our understanding Pribilof was unable to file its funding year 2016 application in a timely fashion due to the new IT system and flawed advice from USAC. Because Pribilof did not receive actual notice of USAC's decision due to an administrative error caused by USAC's IT system, Pribilof did not file its waiver request within 60 days. The Commission's Wireline Competition Bureau then denied Pribilof's appeal because the appeal was filed after the 60-day deadline. It is our further understanding that misinformation provided by USAC may have caused the district to file its application during the wrong application period or as the wrong entity type.

While we understand the importance of deadlines in the administration of any federal program, applicants must receive notice of applicable decisions before they are held accountable to them, and applicants should not be held responsible for errors or misinformation caused by the program's administrator.

The students in the Pribilof School District are the ones most impacted by these errors. We therefore ask the FCC to come to an expeditious resolution to this issue and to please keep us informed of your decision.

Thank you, and we look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

		
Lisa Murkowski United States Senator	Dan Sullivan United States Senator	Don Young Congressman for All Alaska

cc: Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael O'Rielly
Commissioner Brendan Carr
Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel