



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Gwen Moore
U.S. House of Representatives
2252 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Moore:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

I am pleased to report that our focus on restoring these facilities has already paid dividends. Just this past May, the Commission adopted an order to create the *Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund* and *USVI Connect Fund*, to accelerate the restoration of communications networks damaged and destroyed on Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands during the 2017 hurricane season. In the near term, the order provides more than \$64.2 million in additional funding this year to make sure network recovery continues in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In the accompanying notice, we look toward the long term and propose providing \$890 million in funding to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands to enhance connectivity and help future-proof the territories' networks. Moving forward with the efforts outlined in the notice will help ensure that funding is fiscally responsible and enables as many people as possible in the territories to benefit from fixed and mobile communications.

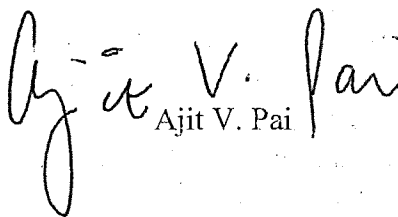
I likewise agree with you on the importance of the Lifeline program in Puerto Rico. That's why the agency waived Lifeline's recertification and non-usage rules for Puerto Rican residents in the hurricane's aftermath—to ensure that subscribers would not lose their Lifeline service at a time when they needed it most. And that's why the Commission took steps in the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order* to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st Century connectivity for all Americans. Notably, the *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating the restriction that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice.

To maintain a robust Lifeline program—one that ensures that all low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico have access to resilient networks that will withstand the next hurricane—it is critical to strengthen the program's efficacy and integrity by reducing the waste, fraud, and abuse that has run rampant in this program for the better part of a decade. For example, GAO discovered 1,234,929 Lifeline subscribers who apparently were not eligible to participate in the program as well as 6,378 individuals who apparently enrolled or recertified after being reported as deceased. That limited sample alone constituted more than \$137 million in abuse each year—potential savings that could be used to bolster the Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund or increase the affordability of communications services for low-income families and veterans.

To address this, the Commission sought comment in the accompanying *Notice* on a wide variety of measures to improve the administration of the Lifeline program—from re-empowering state commissions to police Lifeline carriers to partnering with states to stand up the National Verifier, from improving program audits to adopting a self-enforcing budget. We are currently reviewing the record that has been compiled in response to the *Notice* to determine the best path forward, and your letter has been added to that record. The Lifeline program's goal is—or should be—to empower consumers, not companies. And that will be our lodestar as we move forward to ensure that unscrupulous companies stop abusing this important program.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
U.S. House of Representatives
2083 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Roybal-Allard:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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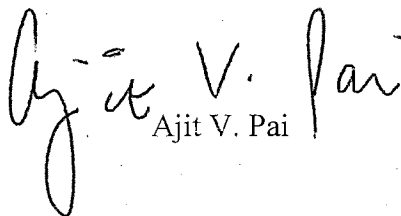
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Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Robert C. Scott
U.S. House of Representatives
1201 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Scott:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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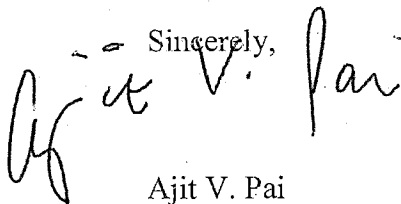
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I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent.

Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Albio Sires
U.S. House of Representatives
2342 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Sires:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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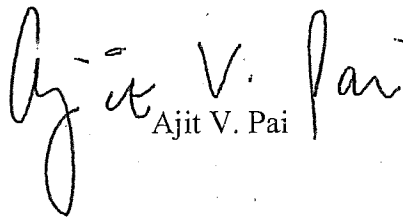
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Juan C. Vargas
U.S. House of Representatives
1605 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Vargas:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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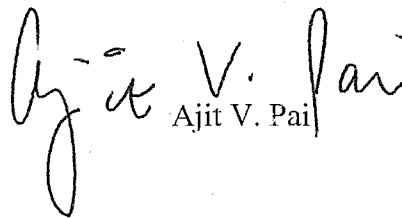
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Frederica S. Wilson
U.S. House of Representatives
2445 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Wilson:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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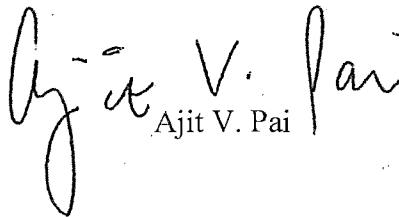
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Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Grace F. Napolitano
U.S. House of Representatives
1610 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Napolitano:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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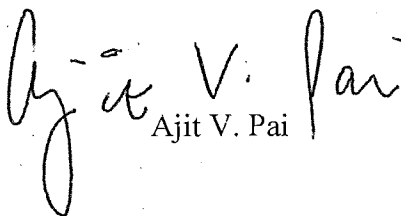
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Tim Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1126 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ryan:

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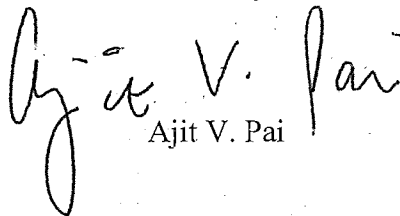
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jose E. Serrano
U.S. House of Representatives
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Serrano:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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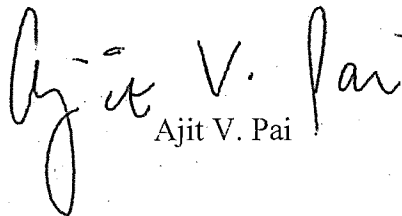
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Darren Soto
U.S. House of Representatives
1429 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Soto:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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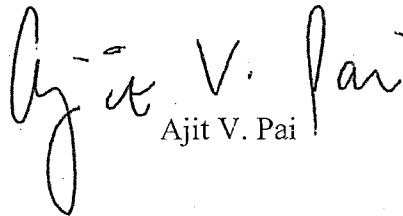
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz
U.S. House of Representatives
1114 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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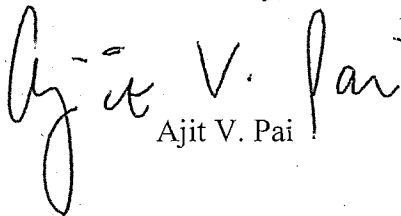
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Donald M. Payne
U.S. House of Representatives
132 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Payne:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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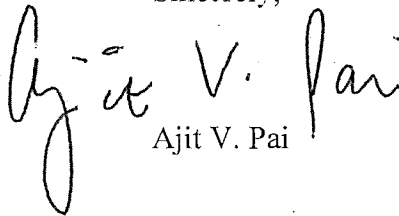
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
U.S. House of Representatives
2367 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Schakowsky:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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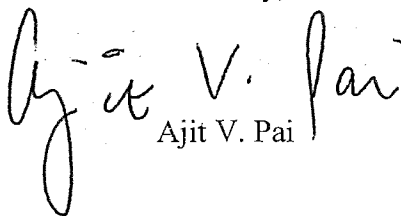
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Carol Shea-Porter
U.S. House of Representatives
1530 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Shea-Porter:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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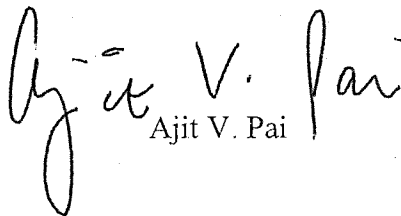
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Dina Titus
U.S. House of Representatives
2464 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Titus:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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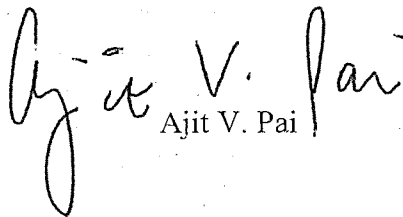
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Peter Welch
U.S. House of Representatives
2303 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Welch:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

I am pleased to report that our focus on restoring these facilities has already paid dividends. Just this past May, the Commission adopted an order to create the *Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund* and *USVI Connect Fund*, to accelerate the restoration of communications networks damaged and destroyed on Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands during the 2017 hurricane season. In the near term, the order provides more than \$64.2 million in additional funding this year to make sure network recovery continues in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In the accompanying notice, we look toward the long term and propose providing \$890 million in funding to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands to enhance connectivity and help future-proof the territories' networks. Moving forward with the efforts outlined in the notice will help ensure that funding is fiscally responsible and enables as many people as possible in the territories to benefit from fixed and mobile communications.

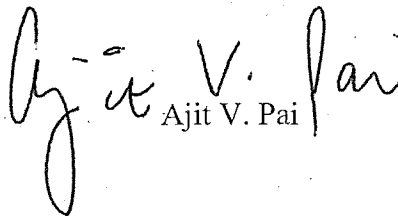
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To maintain a robust Lifeline program—one that ensures that all low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico have access to resilient networks that will withstand the next hurricane—it is critical to strengthen the program's efficacy and integrity by reducing the waste, fraud, and abuse that has run rampant in this program for the better part of a decade. For example, GAO discovered 1,234,929 Lifeline subscribers who apparently were not eligible to participate in the program as well as 6,378 individuals who apparently enrolled or recertified after being reported as deceased. That limited sample alone constituted more than \$137 million in abuse each year—potential savings that could be used to bolster the Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund or increase the affordability of communications services for low-income families and veterans.

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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable John Yarmuth
U.S. House of Representatives
131 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Yarmuth:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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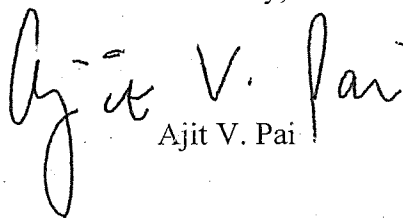
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part of the script. Below the signature, the name "Ajit V. Pai" is printed in a standard, sans-serif font.

Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham
U.S. House of Representatives
214 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Lujan Grisham:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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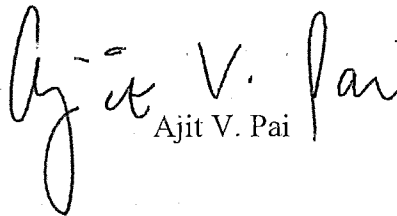
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Tony Cárdenas
U.S. House of Representatives
1510 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Cárdenas:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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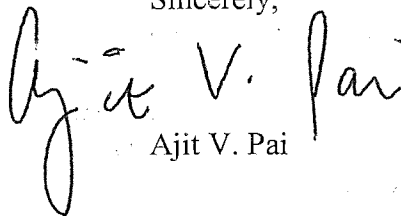
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Yvette D. Clarke
U.S. House of Representatives
2058 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Clarke:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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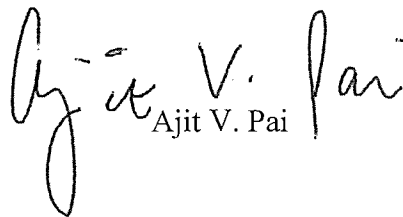
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
U.S. House of Representatives
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman DeLauro:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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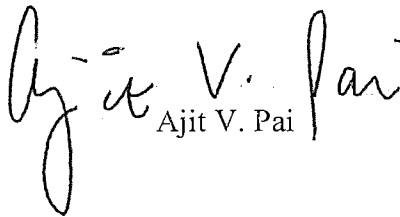
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Adriano Espaillat
U.S. House of Representatives
1630 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Espaillat:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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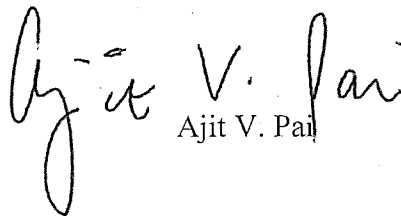
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Raúl M. Grijalva
U.S. House of Representatives
1511 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Grijalva:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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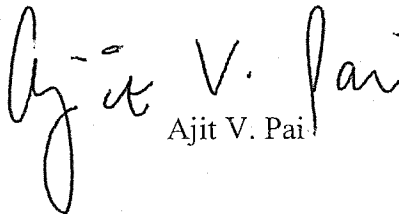
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I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee
U.S. House of Representatives
2187 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Jackson Lee:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

I am pleased to report that our focus on restoring these facilities has already paid dividends. Just this past May, the Commission adopted an order to create the Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund and USVI Connect Fund, to accelerate the restoration of communications networks damaged and destroyed on Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands during the 2017 hurricane season. In the near term, the order provides more than \$64.2 million in additional funding this year to make sure network recovery continues in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In the accompanying notice, we look toward the long term and propose providing \$890 million in funding to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands to enhance connectivity and help future-proof the territories' networks. Moving forward with the efforts outlined in the notice will help ensure that funding is fiscally responsible and enables as many people as possible in the territories to benefit from fixed and mobile communications.

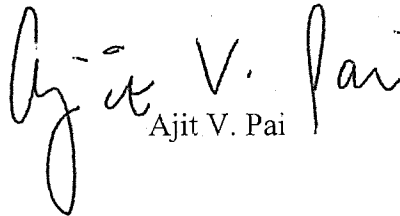
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney
U.S. House of Representatives
2308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Maloney:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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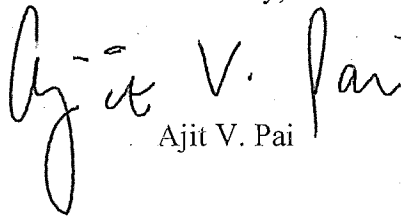
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jerry McNerney
U.S. House of Representatives
2265 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman McNerney:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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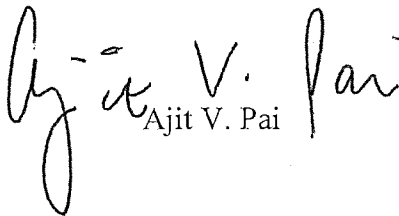
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jim Costa
U.S. House of Representatives
2081 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Costa:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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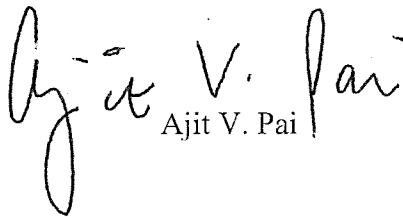
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Eliot L. Engel
U.S. House of Representatives
2462 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Engel:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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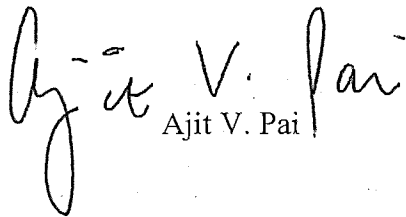
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Dwight Evans
U.S. House of Representatives
1105 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Evans:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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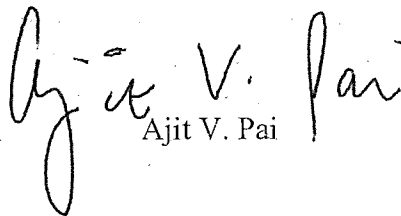
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Luis V. Gutiérrez
U.S. House of Representatives
2408 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Gutiérrez:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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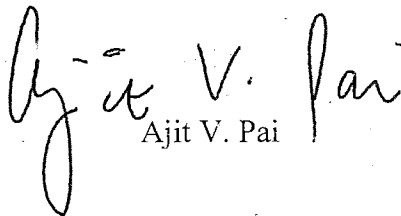
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Ro Khanna
U.S. House of Representatives
513 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Khanna:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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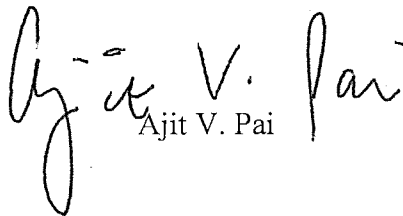
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I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Betty McCollum
U.S. House of Representatives
2256 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman McCollum:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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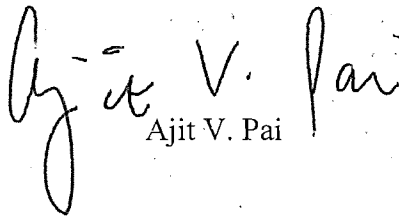
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Grace Meng
U.S. House of Representatives
1317 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Meng:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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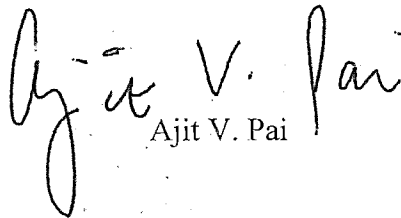
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Nydia M. Velazquez
U.S. House of Representatives
2302 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Velazquez:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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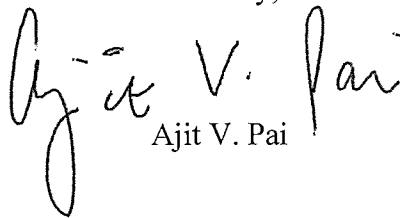
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Blumenthal:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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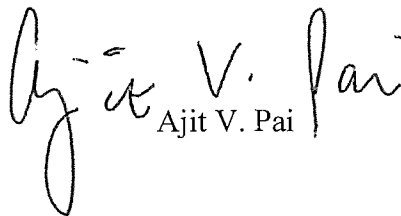
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Sanford D. Bishop
U.S. House of Representatives
2407 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Bishop:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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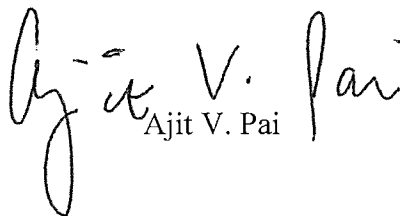
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senate
478 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Gillibrand:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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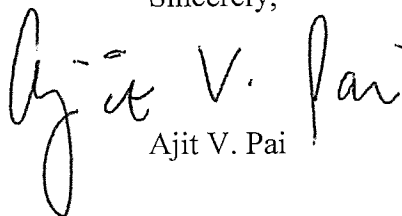
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Brendan F. Boyle
U.S. House of Representatives
1133 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Boyle:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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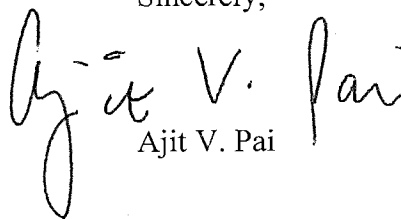
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
United States Senate
317 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Warren:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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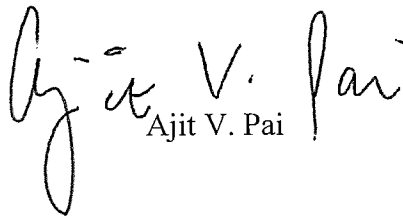
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
United States Senate
B40B Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Harris:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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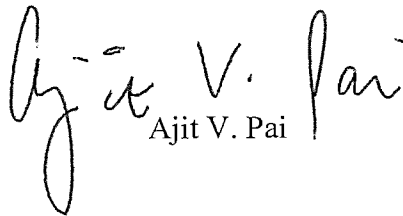
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Robert A. Brady
U.S. House of Representatives
2004 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Brady:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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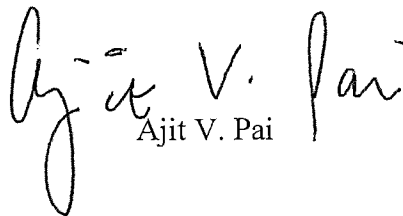
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable David Cicilline
U.S. House of Representatives
2244 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Cicilline:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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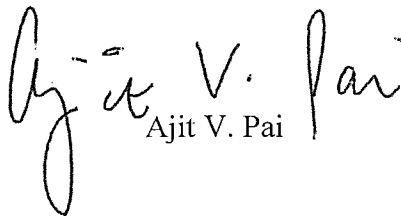
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable John Delaney
U.S. House of Representatives
1632 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Delaney:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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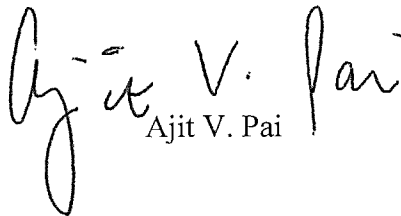
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Anna G. Eshoo
U.S. House of Representatives
241 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Eshoo:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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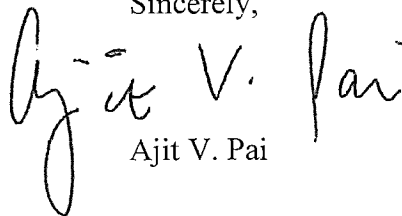
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable John Garamendi
U.S. House of Representatives
2438 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Garamendi:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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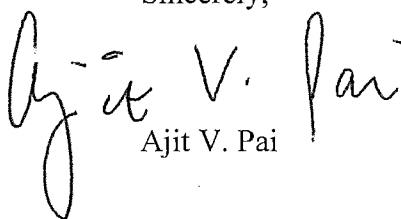
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
U.S. House of Representatives
422 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Hanabusa:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

I am pleased to report that our focus on restoring these facilities has already paid dividends. Just this past May, the Commission adopted an order to create the *Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund* and *USVI Connect Fund*, to accelerate the restoration of communications networks damaged and destroyed on Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands during the 2017 hurricane season. In the near term, the order provides more than \$64.2 million in additional funding this year to make sure network recovery continues in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In the accompanying notice, we look toward the long term and propose providing \$890 million in funding to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands to enhance connectivity and help future-proof the territories' networks. Moving forward with the efforts outlined in the notice will help ensure that funding is fiscally responsible and enables as many people as possible in the territories to benefit from fixed and mobile communications.

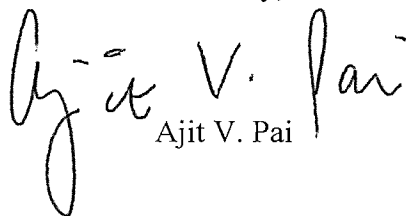
I likewise agree with you on the importance of the Lifeline program in Puerto Rico. That's why the agency waived Lifeline's recertification and non-usage rules for Puerto Rican residents in the hurricane's aftermath—to ensure that subscribers would not lose their Lifeline service at a time when they needed it most. And that's why the Commission took steps in the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order* to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st Century connectivity for all Americans. Notably, the *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating the restriction that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice.

To maintain a robust Lifeline program—one that ensures that all low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico have access to resilient networks that will withstand the next hurricane—it is critical to strengthen the program’s efficacy and integrity by reducing the waste, fraud, and abuse that has run rampant in this program for the better part of a decade. For example, GAO discovered 1,234,929 Lifeline subscribers who apparently were not eligible to participate in the program as well as 6,378 individuals who apparently enrolled or recertified after being reported as deceased. That limited sample alone constituted more than \$137 million in abuse each year—potential savings that could be used to bolster the Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund or increase the affordability of communications services for low-income families and veterans.

To address this, the Commission sought comment in the accompanying *Notice* on a wide variety of measures to improve the administration of the Lifeline program—from re-empowering state commissions to police Lifeline carriers to partnering with states to stand up the National Verifier, from improving program audits to adopting a self-enforcing budget. We are currently reviewing the record that has been compiled in response to the *Notice* to determine the best path forward, and your letter has been added to that record. The Lifeline program’s goal is—or should be—to empower consumers, not companies. And that will be our lodestar as we move forward to ensure that unscrupulous companies stop abusing this important program.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the signature, the name "Ajit V. Pai" is printed in a standard, sans-serif font.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján
U.S. House of Representatives
2231 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Luján:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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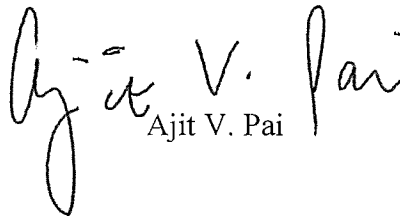
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jim McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman McGovern:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of keeping low-income families and veterans in Puerto Rico connected. I am committed to closing the digital divide and, like you, I believe federal programs like the Universal Service Fund can help do just that. Puerto Rico was particularly hard hit in 2017 by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, causing devastation to homes, businesses, schools, hospitals—virtually anything tangible on the islands. These natural disasters left all too many Puerto Ricans without access to the telephone network or the Internet, as the destruction of facilities was more widespread than anyone expected. As such, our top priority with respect to Puerto Rico has been to ensure the restoration of these critical facilities so that all Puerto Ricans—including low-income families and veterans—can access the connectivity so many of us take for granted.

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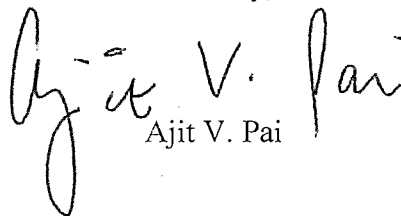
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