

August 2, 2018

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

We are writing to express our support for Petitions for Reconsideration filed by Mescalero Apache Telecom Inc. (MATI)¹ and Sacred Wind Communications, Inc. (Sacred Wind)² now under consideration at the Commission. As you know, the *Tribal Operational Expense Report and Order* added an eligibility condition that possess significant obstacles for carriers serving some of the hardest to serve territory in the country.³

In the *Tribal Operational Expense Report and Order*, the Commission increased the amount of operating expenses that carriers predominantly serving Tribal areas can recover from the Universal Service Fund. The *Tribal Operational Expense Report and Order* also limited the relief to carriers who have not deployed broadband service of 10 Mbps download/1 Mbps upload to 90 percent or more of the housing units on the Tribal land's study area. This limitation will actually harm these carriers' ability to deploy broadband further in their territory. Operational expenses are not reduced when a carrier builds out a broadband network— instead growth could actually lead to increased costs. It is our hope that you will direct the appropriate staff to work with the impacted companies on a path forward.

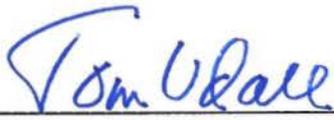
We appreciate the Commission's support of the *Tribal Operational Expense Report and Order*. However, we believe that MATI and Sacred Wind should not be excluded from this relief and the Commission should issue the relief requested in the Petitions.

Sincerely,

¹ *Connect America Fund*, [Petition for Reconsideration of Mescalero Apache Telecom, Inc.](#), WC Docket No. 10-90 (May 30, 2018).

² *Connect America Fund*, [Petition for Reconsideration of Sacred Wind Communications, Inc.](#), WC Docket No. 10-90 (May 31, 2018).

³ *Connect America Fund*, [Report and Order](#), WC Docket No. 10-90, FCC 18-37 (rel. Apr. 5, 2018) (*Tribal Operational Expense Report and Order*).



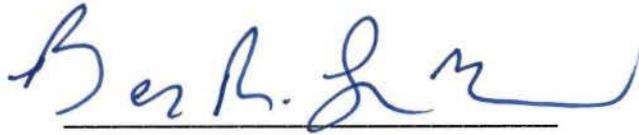
Tom Udall
United States Senator



Steve Pearce
United States Representative



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Ben Ray Luján
United States Representative



Michelle Lujan Grisham
United States Representative