

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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September 13, 2018

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

Dear Chairman Pai,

As we work to close the digital divide, it is critical that we understand where broadband is available and where it is not. In many rural areas, the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) mobile coverage maps and nationwide broadband coverage reports overstate service quality and geography. To address this issue, we encourage you to improve the National Broadband Map by using consumer-reported data to increase the accuracy of the FCC's mobile coverage maps.

The information currently collected by the FCC on broadband coverage is not detailed enough to provide an accurate picture of conditions at the local level, especially in rural areas. Without an improvement in data collection, maps will continue to inaccurately suggest service availability in unserved or underserved areas. Too many consumers have experienced the frustration of seeing an area covered on a map only to find out no service or extremely limited coverage is available on the ground. When coverage maps overstate service, it is often rural consumers that pay the price.

While the FCC is limited in its ability to verify nationwide broadband coverage at the local level, consumers can provide valuable feedback about the actual availability and strength of service in their own communities. By "crowdsourcing" data, the FCC could produce maps that more accurately reflect the real experiences of consumers in the places they live and work. The FCC's Speed Test App allows consumers to take sophisticated measurements about the quality of service in a particular area. This data should be used to ensure maps do not overstate coverage. For example, if a consumer finds that no coverage or limited service exists in an area reported as served, their data should be reflected in the FCC's maps. Consumers—as well as state and municipal agencies—can be our eyes and ears on the ground. As we work on improving the accuracy of our coverage maps, we encourage the FCC to consider this as one method to produce the most accurate maps possible.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator