

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

778

September 26, 2018

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

We appreciate the efforts of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to streamline and strengthen the federal High-Cost Universal Service Fund (USF). As you know, this USF program is extremely important to rural America as it helps bring affordable broadband services to parts of the country that are the most difficult and costly to serve. We ask the FCC to continue to work to ensure the USF's high-cost program is able to meet the needs of rural America.

Iowa is a very rural state and has many more local service providers than any other state. These companies work hard to provide service to the communities and families in their areas. However, it remains very challenging for these small providers to build out vital broadband services to the most rural areas and the last mile. Farmers, businesses, and families need access to reliable broadband to maintain and expand their operations, provide access to healthcare, and meet educational requirements.

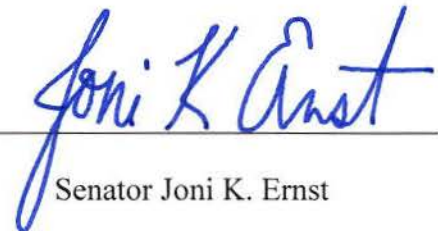
The USF's high-cost program has played a key role in helping many of these companies build out broadband to the most rural areas. It is important that the high-cost program remains a reliable and effective tool for them to use, access, and plan.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter to rural America. We look forward to working with the FCC to ensure that the USF's high-cost program is robust, reliable, and consistent.

Sincerely,



Senator Charles E. Grassley



Senator Joni K. Ernst