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VICE CHAIRMAN, SENATE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 7, 2018

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS

COMMERCE, SCIENCE
AND TRANSPORTATION

RULES AND
ADMINISTRATION,
CHAIRMAN

SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE

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

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Dear Chairman Pai,

Constituents have contacted me and shared that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is currently reviewing the Universal Service Fund High-Cost budget to offer greater certainty and predictability to rate-of-return carriers. I ask that the FCC review and consider a recent petition from a rate-of-return carrier related to abandoned, unserved locations in Missouri.

According to Grand River Mutual Telephone Corporation (GRM), they submitted a Petition for Reconsideration of the FCC's March 23, 2018 Report and Order on May 2, 2018. The petition details an administrative error in a previous year's Form 477 that resulted in a preclusion of Alternative Connect America Model (A-CAM) funding from 747 individual locations in Missouri. Prior to the A-CAM offer to rate-of-return carriers in August 2016, it is my understanding that GRM was eligible for funding in these areas. Subsequently, GRM filed a September 2016 petition for a waiver that would have revised the previously misrepresented Form 477 data. GRM has informed me that this petition was denied by the FCC.

This Congress, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, of which I am a member, analyzed issues related to the Form 477 reporting process to encourage the most accurate broadband map possible. Funding decisions based off of Form 477 data have a direct effect on unserved populations in Missouri and across the country. I am surprised to hear that a previous attempt to revise this map was denied, however, I am not surprised to hear that a mapping error may have resulted in abandoned locations for high-cost support.

I request that the FCC review the previous submissions by GRM, as well as the Petition for Reconsideration dated May 2, and consider adopting and funding these 747 orphaned locations in Missouri. For rural residents in these areas, receiving high-cost support may significantly improve quality of life.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of this matter.

Sincere regards,



Roy Blunt
United States Senator