



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

October 16, 2019

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Brian Mast
U.S. House of Representatives
2182 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Mast:

Thank you for your letter regarding the implementation of the Lifeline program's National Eligibility Verifier. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and I believe that the Lifeline program can help do just that. I agree that implementing the National Verifier nationwide will help root out waste, fraud, and abuse in the Lifeline program.

As you note, a petition was filed requesting that the Federal Communications Commission grant a limited waiver to allow carriers to assist consumers with the Lifeline enrollment process by submitting eligibility documentation to the National Verifier on their behalf via bulk transfer. However, as you also note, such relief was requested as an interim measure until the Commission implements an application programming interface (API) in the National Verifier that would support the exchange of information between the Verifier and carrier systems for purposes of eligibility determinations.

To that end, the FCC has directed the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), the administrator of the Lifeline program, to develop an API that would permit carriers to interface directly with the National Verifier to conduct eligibility checks and receive eligibility result responses. Carriers began testing the API last month. Once fully deployed, this enhancement will allow service providers to better integrate the National Verifier with their own online enrollment systems and processes, while still maintaining program integrity. Additionally, when manual review of eligibility documentation is required, consumers can already upload such documentation to the National Verifier using the Verifier's online consumer portal and carriers can assist consumers with uploading such documentation through the Verifier's online service provider portal.

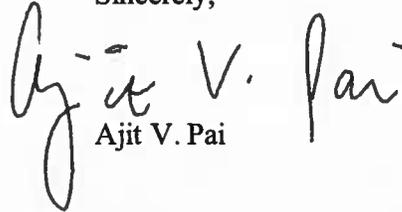
Your letter also notes the importance of securing adequate database access to verify eligibility. USAC and the Commission continue to work to increase the automated connections available through the National Verifier as the rollout progresses. I'm pleased to report that, as of September 17, 2019, the FCC and USAC have established an automated connection with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to automatically verify the eligibility of Lifeline applicants who participate in Medicaid. This connection is a significant step forward in implementation of the National Verifier because it will enable the Verifier to automatically verify the eligibility of up to 60% of Lifeline subscribers across the country. The FCC and USAC have also established automated connections in 12 states so far, and continue to work

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closely with other states to establish additional connections. We remain willing to work with any state, territory, or district that would like to establish an automated eligibility verification connection, including with states that express interest in establishing such a connection after the National Verifier has soft launched in that state.

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 style with a large initial "A".

Ajit V. Pai