



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

December 31, 2019

The Honorable Cindy Axne  
U.S. House of Representatives  
330 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Axne:

Thank you for your letter concerning the Commission's ongoing work in the 2.5 GHz band, also known as the Educational Broadband Service (EBS). The 2.5 GHz band offers great potential for supporting the deployment of wireless broadband services across the country, including in unserved and underserved areas.

Unfortunately, that potential has not been recognized in the nearly six-decade experience with the band. The band—a public resource—is especially unused west of the Mississippi River. Moreover, what spectrum is in use is typically leased to commercial carriers by “nonprofit” middlemen, including some that have found a lucrative revenue stream to use for their own political advocacy, not the education of America's children. Indeed, Commissioner Carr has discovered the existing educational requirements are too often honored in the breach—that incumbent licensees are “liquidating the spectrum and spending cash on pet projects. Political campaigns. Buying a non-GMO farm. Even pocketing millions of this tax-free money for themselves.” The Commission has no interest in allowing that state of affairs to continue, nor in extending this model even further by granting exclusive use of this band to some of the same “educational” entities that have not used it, or not used it for its intended use, to date.

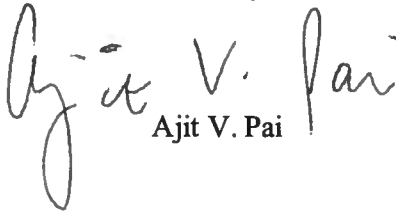
This public resource should be devoted to the public—not to those who have indulged arbitrage for too many years. The best way to deliver mobile broadband services using the 2.5 GHz band, and thus to help close the digital divide across rural America, is to make it directly available through transparent, well-established FCC mechanisms. This is particularly appropriate given significant demand for mid-band spectrum (such as this band) for 5G networks, due in part to its favorable characteristics for enabling both wireless coverage and data capacity.

Accordingly, the Commission took a three-step strategy to facilitate the rapid deployment of wireless broadband services. First, we established a priority filing window for rural Tribal Nations to provide them with an opportunity to obtain unassigned 2.5 GHz spectrum to address the communications needs of their communities. Second, we afforded incumbent educational entities with licenses more flexibility to put existing licenses to their best use. And third, we determined that an auction of remaining 2.5 GHz spectrum, consistent with the competitive bidding authority Congress granted the FCC over a quarter-century ago, would be the most appropriate way to allocate the remainder of these important airwaves.

Page 2—The Honorable Cindy Axne

Thank you once again for your interest. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part, followed by "V." and "Pai".

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

December 31, 2019

The Honorable Grace Meng  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1317 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Meng:

Thank you for your letter concerning the Commission's ongoing work in the 2.5 GHz band, also known as the Educational Broadband Service (EBS). The 2.5 GHz band offers great potential for supporting the deployment of wireless broadband services across the country, including in unserved and underserved areas.

Unfortunately, that potential has not been recognized in the nearly six-decade experience with the band. The band—a public resource—is especially unused west of the Mississippi River. Moreover, what spectrum is in use is typically leased to commercial carriers by “nonprofit” middlemen, including some that have found a lucrative revenue stream to use for their own political advocacy, not the education of America's children. Indeed, Commissioner Carr has discovered the existing educational requirements are too often honored in the breach—that incumbent licensees are “liquidating the spectrum and spending cash on pet projects. Political campaigns. Buying a non-GMO farm. Even pocketing millions of this tax-free money for themselves.” The Commission has no interest in allowing that state of affairs to continue, nor in extending this model even further by granting exclusive use of this band to some of the same “educational” entities that have not used it, or not used it for its intended use, to date.

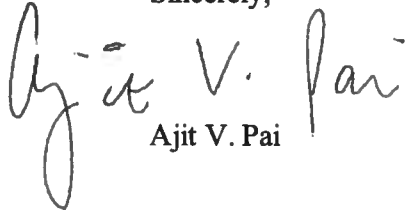
This public resource should be devoted to the public—not to those who have indulged arbitrage for too many years. The best way to deliver mobile broadband services using the 2.5 GHz band, and thus to help close the digital divide across rural America, is to make it directly available through transparent, well-established FCC mechanisms. This is particularly appropriate given significant demand for mid-band spectrum (such as this band) for 5G networks, due in part to its favorable characteristics for enabling both wireless coverage and data capacity.

Accordingly, the Commission took a three-step strategy to facilitate the rapid deployment of wireless broadband services. First, we established a priority filing window for rural Tribal Nations to provide them with an opportunity to obtain unassigned 2.5 GHz spectrum to address the communications needs of their communities. Second, we afforded incumbent educational entities with licenses more flexibility to put existing licenses to their best use. And third, we determined that an auction of remaining 2.5 GHz spectrum, consistent with the competitive bidding authority Congress granted the FCC over a quarter-century ago, would be the most appropriate way to allocate the remainder of these important airwaves.

Page 2—The Honorable Grace Meng

Thank you once again for your interest. Please let me know if I can be of 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, looping initial "A".

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

December 31, 2019

The Honorable James E. Clyburn  
U.S. House of Representatives  
242 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Clyburn:

Thank you for your letter concerning the Commission's ongoing work in the 2.5 GHz band, also known as the Educational Broadband Service (EBS). The 2.5 GHz band offers great potential for supporting the deployment of wireless broadband services across the country, including in unserved and underserved areas.

Unfortunately, that potential has not been recognized in the nearly six-decade experience with the band. The band—a public resource—is especially unused west of the Mississippi River. Moreover, what spectrum is in use is typically leased to commercial carriers by “nonprofit” middlemen, including some that have found a lucrative revenue stream to use for their own political advocacy, not the education of America's children. Indeed, Commissioner Carr has discovered the existing educational requirements are too often honored in the breach—that incumbent licensees are “liquidating the spectrum and spending cash on pet projects. Political campaigns. Buying a non-GMO farm. Even pocketing millions of this tax-free money for themselves.” The Commission has no interest in allowing that state of affairs to continue, nor in extending this model even further by granting exclusive use of this band to some of the same “educational” entities that have not used it, or not used it for its intended use, to date.

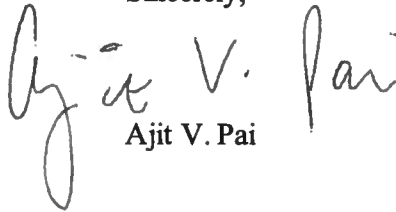
This public resource should be devoted to the public—not to those who have indulged arbitrage for too many years. The best way to deliver mobile broadband services using the 2.5 GHz band, and thus to help close the digital divide across rural America, is to make it directly available through transparent, well-established FCC mechanisms. This is particularly appropriate given significant demand for mid-band spectrum (such as this band) for 5G networks, due in part to its favorable characteristics for enabling both wireless coverage and data capacity.

Accordingly, the Commission took a three-step strategy to facilitate the rapid deployment of wireless broadband services. First, we established a priority filing window for rural Tribal Nations to provide them with an opportunity to obtain unassigned 2.5 GHz spectrum to address the communications needs of their communities. Second, we afforded incumbent educational entities with licenses more flexibility to put existing licenses to their best use. And third, we determined that an auction of remaining 2.5 GHz spectrum, consistent with the competitive bidding authority Congress granted the FCC over a quarter-century ago, would be the most appropriate way to allocate the remainder of these important airwaves.

Page 2—The Honorable James E. Clyburn

Thank you once again for your interest. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and stylized, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part of the script.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

December 31, 2019

The Honorable Ro Khanna  
U.S. House of Representatives  
221 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Khanna:

Thank you for your letter concerning the Commission's ongoing work in the 2.5 GHz band, also known as the Educational Broadband Service (EBS). The 2.5 GHz band offers great potential for supporting the deployment of wireless broadband services across the country, including in unserved and underserved areas.

Unfortunately, that potential has not been recognized in the nearly six-decade experience with the band. The band—a public resource—is especially unused west of the Mississippi River. Moreover, what spectrum is in use is typically leased to commercial carriers by “nonprofit” middlemen, including some that have found a lucrative revenue stream to use for their own political advocacy, not the education of America's children. Indeed, Commissioner Carr has discovered the existing educational requirements are too often honored in the breach—that incumbent licensees are “liquidating the spectrum and spending cash on pet projects. Political campaigns. Buying a non-GMO farm. Even pocketing millions of this tax-free money for themselves.” The Commission has no interest in allowing that state of affairs to continue, nor in extending this model even further by granting exclusive use of this band to some of the same “educational” entities that have not used it, or not used it for its intended use, to date.

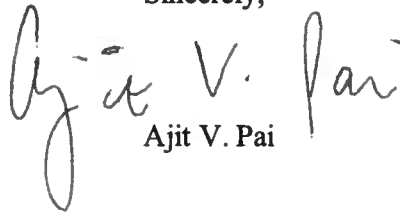
This public resource should be devoted to the public—not to those who have indulged arbitrage for too many years. The best way to deliver mobile broadband services using the 2.5 GHz band, and thus to help close the digital divide across rural America, is to make it directly available through transparent, well-established FCC mechanisms. This is particularly appropriate given significant demand for mid-band spectrum (such as this band) for 5G networks, due in part to its favorable characteristics for enabling both wireless coverage and data capacity.

Accordingly, the Commission took a three-step strategy to facilitate the rapid deployment of wireless broadband services. First, we established a priority filing window for rural Tribal Nations to provide them with an opportunity to obtain unassigned 2.5 GHz spectrum to address the communications needs of their communities. Second, we afforded incumbent educational entities with licenses more flexibility to put existing licenses to their best use. And third, we determined that an auction of remaining 2.5 GHz spectrum, consistent with the competitive bidding authority Congress granted the FCC over a quarter-century ago, would be the most appropriate way to allocate the remainder of these important airwaves.

Page 2—The Honorable Ro Khanna

Thank you once again for your interest. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and stylized, with the first and last names being more prominent than the middle initial.

Ajit V. Pai





FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

December 31, 2019

The Honorable TJ Cox  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1728 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Cox:

Thank you for your letter concerning the Commission's ongoing work in the 2.5 GHz band, also known as the Educational Broadband Service (EBS). The 2.5 GHz band offers great potential for supporting the deployment of wireless broadband services across the country, including in unserved and underserved areas.

Unfortunately, that potential has not been recognized in the nearly six-decade experience with the band. The band—a public resource—is especially unused west of the Mississippi River. Moreover, what spectrum is in use is typically leased to commercial carriers by “nonprofit” middlemen, including some that have found a lucrative revenue stream to use for their own political advocacy, not the education of America's children. Indeed, Commissioner Carr has discovered the existing educational requirements are too often honored in the breach—that incumbent licensees are “liquidating the spectrum and spending cash on pet projects. Political campaigns. Buying a non-GMO farm. Even pocketing millions of this tax-free money for themselves.” The Commission has no interest in allowing that state of affairs to continue, nor in extending this model even further by granting exclusive use of this band to some of the same “educational” entities that have not used it, or not used it for its intended use, to date.

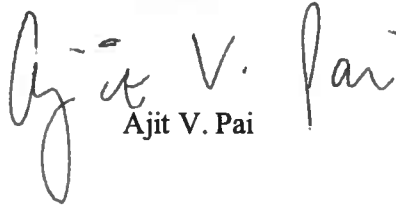
This public resource should be devoted to the public—not to those who have indulged arbitrage for too many years. The best way to deliver mobile broadband services using the 2.5 GHz band, and thus to help close the digital divide across rural America, is to make it directly available through transparent, well-established FCC mechanisms. This is particularly appropriate given significant demand for mid-band spectrum (such as this band) for 5G networks, due in part to its favorable characteristics for enabling both wireless coverage and data capacity.

Accordingly, the Commission took a three-step strategy to facilitate the rapid deployment of wireless broadband services. First, we established a priority filing window for rural Tribal Nations to provide them with an opportunity to obtain unassigned 2.5 GHz spectrum to address the communications needs of their communities. Second, we afforded incumbent educational entities with licenses more flexibility to put existing licenses to their best use. And third, we determined that an auction of remaining 2.5 GHz spectrum, consistent with the competitive bidding authority Congress granted the FCC over a quarter-century ago, would be the most appropriate way to allocate the remainder of these important airwaves.

Page 2—The Honorable TJ Cox

Thank you once again for your interest. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and stylized, with the first and last names being more prominent than the middle initial.

Ajit V. Pai