



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Cory Booker
United States Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Booker:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

That's why, last August, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking proposing to establish the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. This modernized approach for connecting the hardest-to-serve areas of our country would be the biggest step yet the Commission has taken to close the digital divide. It would build on the success of the CAF Phase II auction and provide more than \$20 billion over the next decade to support up to gigabit service to millions of unserved Americans through a competitive reverse auction.

At the FCC's January meeting, we will be voting on final rules to establish the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. These rules would target support to areas that lack access to fixed voice and 25/3 Mbps broadband and would implement a two-phase approach. Phase I would target support to wholly unserved census blocks—those areas where our existing data tell us there is no 25/3 Mbps service at all—in order to make sure that the areas most in need will get broadband service quickly. Then, Phase II will fill in the remaining coverage gaps by supporting networks that will serve partially unserved census blocks, along with areas not won in Phase I. Phase II would leverage the Commission's Digital Opportunity Data Collection, the new granular, precise broadband mapping initiative the agency adopted this past August. In short, we're proposing to connect more Americans to faster broadband networks than any other universal service program has done.

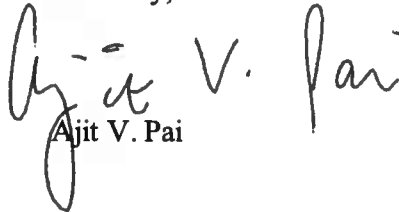
In your letter, you emphasize the importance of funding sustainable networks. I agree. That's why the draft rules that I have presented to my colleagues would make three key departures from the CAF Phase II auction so that the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund supports networks that will stand the test of time. *First*, it would more than double the minimum speeds that bidders must commit to provide. *Second*, it would modify the weights that apply to bids to favor faster, lower latency networks. *And third*, as soon as the total price of all bids in the auction falls below the auction's budget, support would be awarded to the bidder with the

highest-performing network in each area. In other words, the auction would support the best network possible in each area given the available budget. These changes would have a significant impact in addressing your request that the Commission promote the deployment of sustainable networks through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund.

I also agree with you that consumers will only get the full benefits of connectivity if the carriers receiving universal service support through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund deliver the network they commit to provide. That's why under the draft rules the Commission would thoroughly vet the technical and financial capabilities of applicants before allowing them to participate in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction. And once winning bidders start deploying their networks, they would be subject to the same rigorous performance testing procedures that the Commission adopted in October for all carriers receiving support through the Connect America Fund. These requirements would ensure that carriers remain accountable to consumers, taxpayers, and the Commission.

Thank you for your interest in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to close the digital divide.

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
425 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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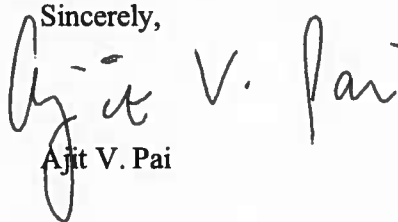
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Angus King
United States Senate
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator King:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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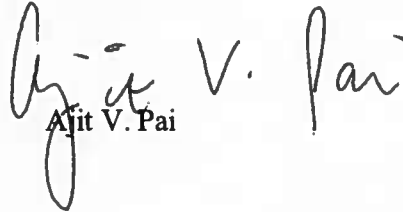
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF
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January 21, 2020

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senate
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cardin:

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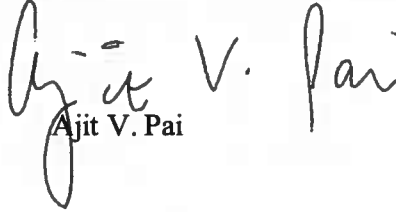
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF
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January 21, 2020

The Honorable Bob Casey
United States Senate
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Casey:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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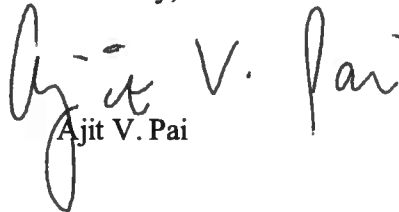
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF
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January 21, 2020

The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senate
516 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cortez Masto:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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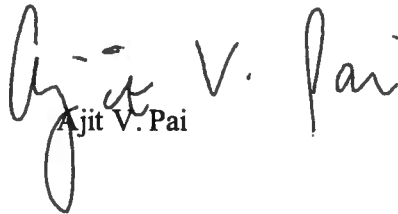
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Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grassley:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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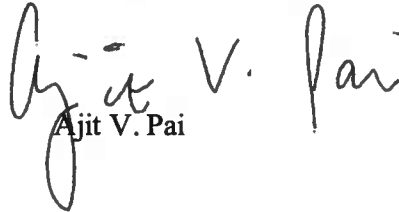
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
United States Senate
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hyde-Smith:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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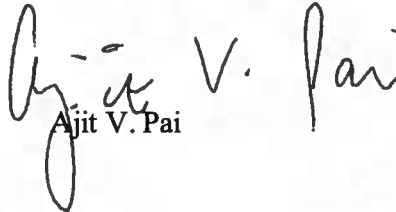
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January 21, 2020

The Honorable David Perdue
United States Senate
455 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Perdue:

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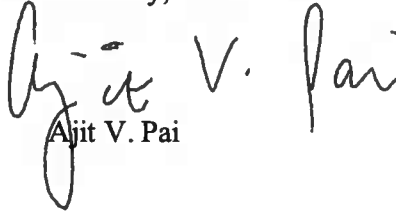
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Thank you for your interest in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to close the digital divide.

Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Deb Fischer
United States Senate
454 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Fischer:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

That's why, last August, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking proposing to establish the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. This modernized approach for connecting the hardest-to-serve areas of our country would be the biggest step yet the Commission has taken to close the digital divide. It would build on the success of the CAF Phase II auction and provide more than \$20 billion over the next decade to support up to gigabit service to millions of unserved Americans through a competitive reverse auction.

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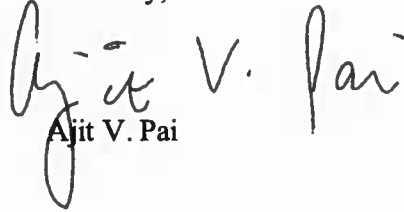
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Thank you for your interest in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to close the digital divide.

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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
United States Senate
731 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Stabenow:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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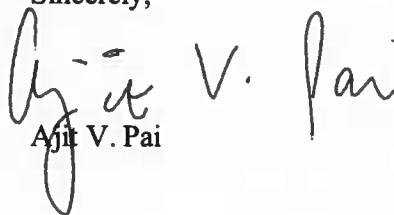
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Gary Peters
United States Senate
724 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Peters:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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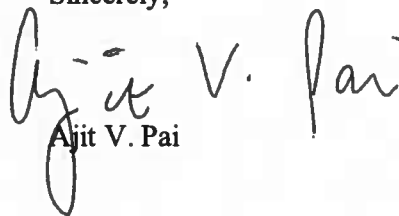
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Jacky Rosen
United States Senate
G12 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Rosen:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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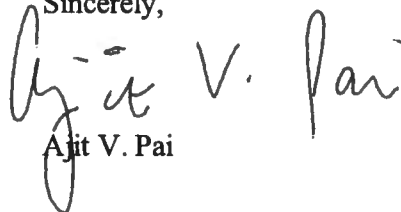
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senate
506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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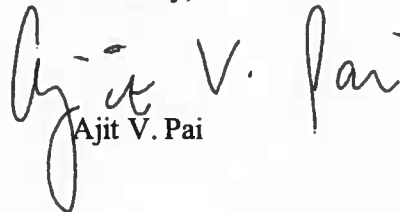
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Jerry Moran
United States Senate
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Moran:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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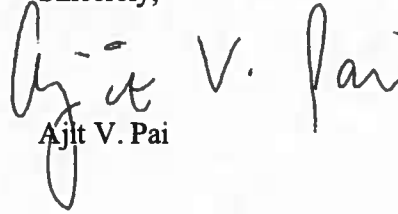
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Jim Risch
United States Senate
483 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Risch:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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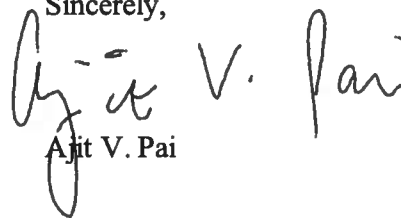
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable John Barrasso
United States Senate
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Barrasso:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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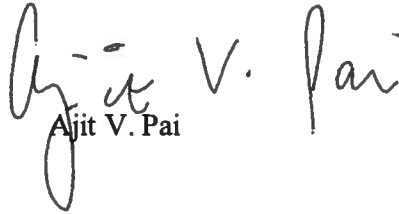
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Thank you for your interest in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to close the digital divide.

Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable John Boozman
United States Senate
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Boozman:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

That's why, last August, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking proposing to establish the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. This modernized approach for connecting the hardest-to-serve areas of our country would be the biggest step yet the Commission has taken to close the digital divide. It would build on the success of the CAF Phase II auction and provide more than \$20 billion over the next decade to support up to gigabit service to millions of unserved Americans through a competitive reverse auction.

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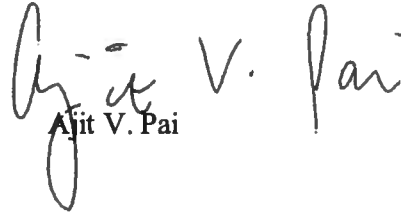
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable John Hoeven
United States Senate
338 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hoeven:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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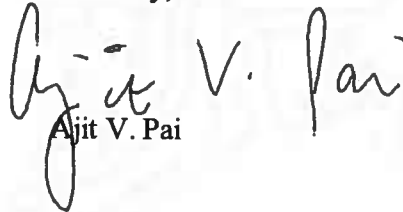
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable John Thune
United States Senate
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Thune:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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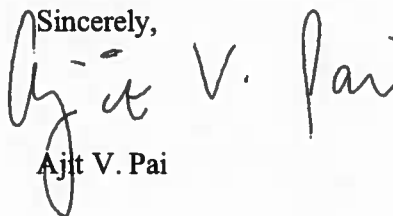
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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Joni Ernst
United States Senate
730 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Ernst:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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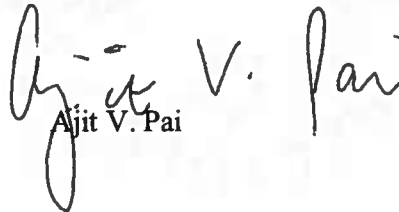
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Joshua Hawley
United States Senate
B40A Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hawley:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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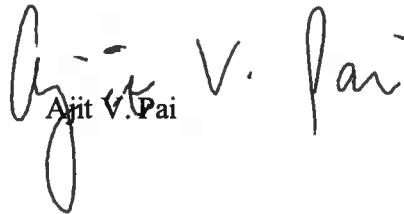
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Sincerely,


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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Kevin Cramer
United States Senate
B240C Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cramer:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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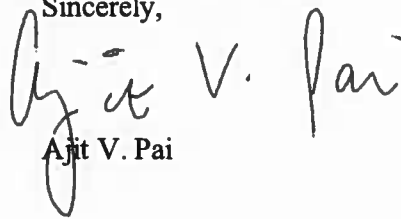
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senate
478 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Gillibrand:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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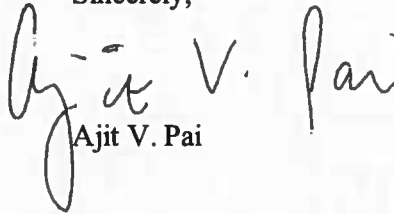
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senate
317 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sinema:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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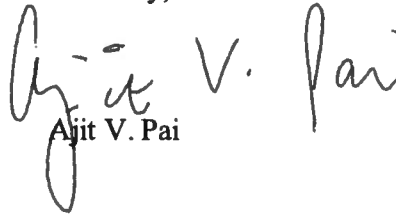
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Thank you for your interest in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to close the digital divide.

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Maggie Hassan
United States Senate
330 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hassan:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

That's why, last August, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking proposing to establish the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. This modernized approach for connecting the hardest-to-serve areas of our country would be the biggest step yet the Commission has taken to close the digital divide. It would build on the success of the CAF Phase II auction and provide more than \$20 billion over the next decade to support up to gigabit service to millions of unserved Americans through a competitive reverse auction.

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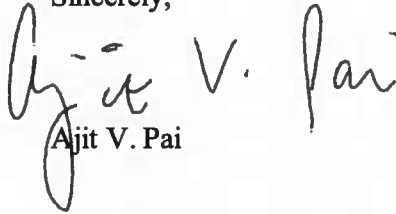
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Marco Rubio
United States Senate
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Rubio:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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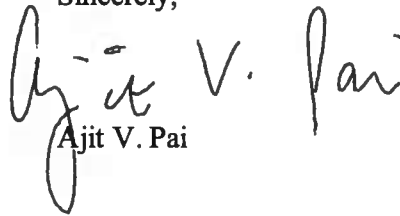
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Marsha Blackburn
United States Senate
B40B Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Blackburn:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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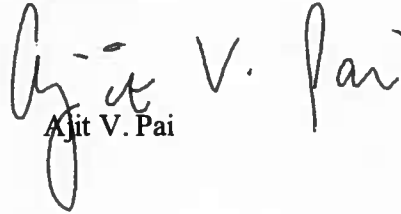
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Martha McSally
United States Senate
B40D Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator McSally:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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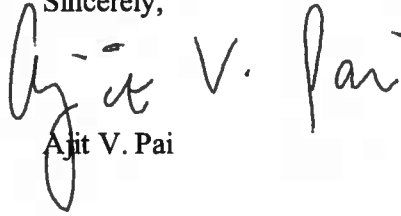
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Michael Bennet
United States Senate
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Bennet:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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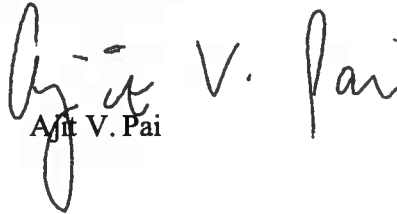
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Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Michael D. Crapo
United States Senate
239 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Crapo:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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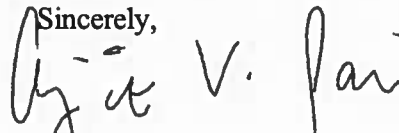
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Michael B. Enzi
United States Senate
379A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Enzi:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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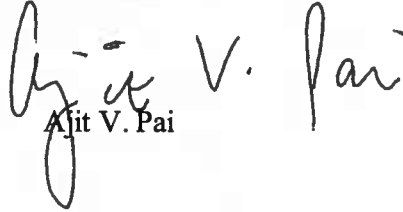
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Mike Braun
United States Senate
B85 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Braun:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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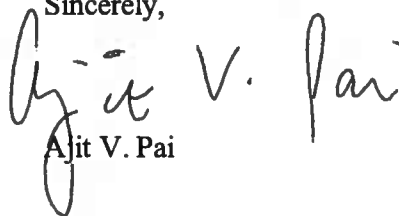
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Mike Rounds
United States Senate
502 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Rounds:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

That's why, last August, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking proposing to establish the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. This modernized approach for connecting the hardest-to-serve areas of our country would be the biggest step yet the Commission has taken to close the digital divide. It would build on the success of the CAF Phase II auction and provide more than \$20 billion over the next decade to support up to gigabit service to millions of unserved Americans through a competitive reverse auction.

At the FCC's January meeting, we will be voting on final rules to establish the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. These rules would target support to areas that lack access to fixed voice and 25/3 Mbps broadband and would implement a two-phase approach. Phase I would target support to wholly unserved census blocks—those areas where our existing data tell us there is no 25/3 Mbps service at all—in order to make sure that the areas most in need will get broadband service quickly. Then, Phase II will fill in the remaining coverage gaps by supporting networks that will serve partially unserved census blocks, along with areas not won in Phase I. Phase II would leverage the Commission's Digital Opportunity Data Collection, the new granular, precise broadband mapping initiative the agency adopted this past August. In short, we're proposing to connect more Americans to faster broadband networks than any other universal service program has done.

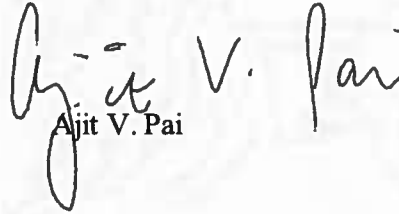
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I also agree with you that consumers will only get the full benefits of connectivity if the carriers receiving universal service support through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund deliver the network they commit to provide. That's why under the draft rules the Commission would thoroughly vet the technical and financial capabilities of applicants before allowing them to participate in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction. And once winning bidders start deploying their networks, they would be subject to the same rigorous performance testing procedures that the Commission adopted in October for all carriers receiving support through the Connect America Fund. These requirements would ensure that carriers remain accountable to consumers, taxpayers, and the Commission.

Thank you for your interest in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to close the digital divide.

Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Pat Roberts
United States Senate
109 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Roberts:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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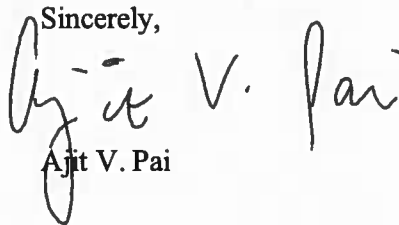
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Thank you for your interest in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to close the digital divide.

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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Murray:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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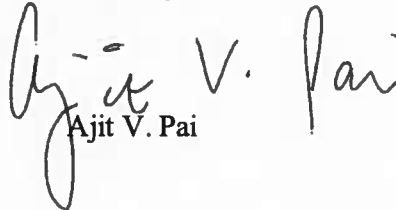
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Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Durbin:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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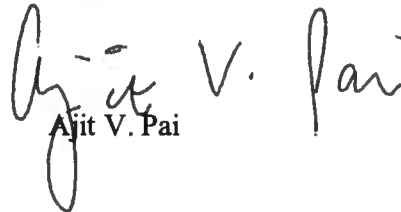
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Ron Johnson
United States Senate
328 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Johnson:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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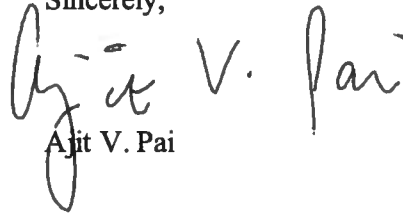
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senate
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Capito:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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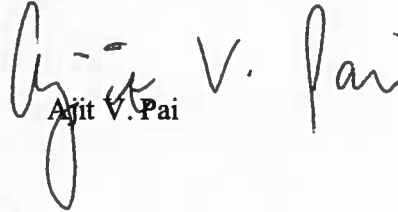
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Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Steve Daines
United States Senate
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Daines:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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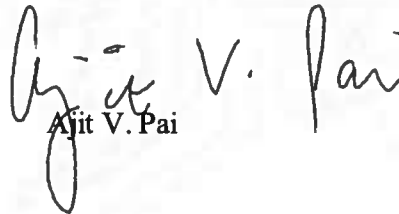
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baldwin:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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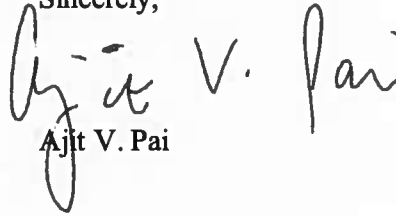
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Tammy Duckworth
United States Senate
524 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Duckworth:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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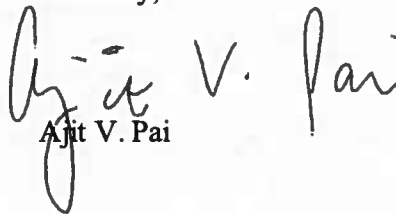
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Thank you for your interest in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to close the digital divide.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Thom Tillis
United States Senate
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Tillis:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

That's why, last August, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking proposing to establish the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. This modernized approach for connecting the hardest-to-serve areas of our country would be the biggest step yet the Commission has taken to close the digital divide. It would build on the success of the CAF Phase II auction and provide more than \$20 billion over the next decade to support up to gigabit service to millions of unserved Americans through a competitive reverse auction.

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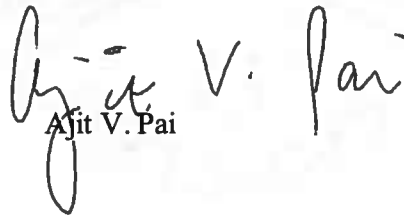
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Tina Smith
United States Senate
720 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Smith:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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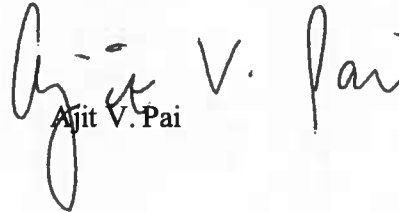
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Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Todd Young
United States Senate
400 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Young:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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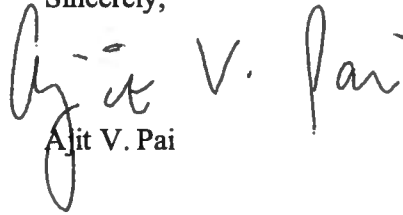
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Tom Cotton
United States Senate
124 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cotton:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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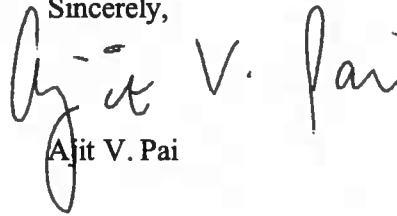
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
United States Senate
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Markey:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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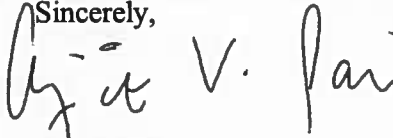
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senate
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Udall:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to encourage high-speed, reliable, affordable broadband deployment to rural communities through the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And I wholeheartedly agree with you that it is imperative that the Universal Service Fund support sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow's broadband applications, as well as today's.

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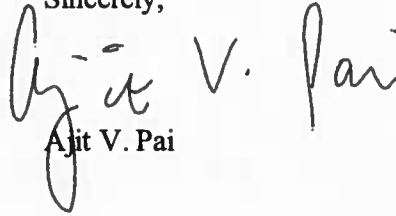
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