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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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
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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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Angus King  
United States Senate  
133 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator King:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
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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Ajit V. Pai
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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 21, 2020

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

Dear Senator Hyde-Smith:

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

Dear Senator Perdue:

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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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.

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
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[Signature]

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
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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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
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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Sincerely,

V. Pai

Ajit V. Pai
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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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 21, 2020

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

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

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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.

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
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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
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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Sincerely,

[Signature]

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senate  
478 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Gillibrand:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
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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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
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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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 21, 2020

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

Dear Senator Blackburn:

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[Signature]

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Martha McSally  
United States Senate  
B40D Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator McSally:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Michael Bennet  
United States Senate  
261 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Bennet:

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[Signature]
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.

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
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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
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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Ajit V. Pai
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 supports sustainable, future-proofed networks that will support tomorrow’s broadband applications, as well as today’s.

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Ajit V. Pai
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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Pat Roberts  
United States Senate  
109 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Roberts:

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Sincerely,

[Signature]

Ajit V. Pai
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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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
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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Ajit V. Pai
January 21, 2020

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

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Sincerely,

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

Dear Senator Capito:

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[Signature]

V. Pai
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Ajit V. Pai
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.

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
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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
Dear Senator Duckworth:

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Sincerely,

[Signature]

Ajit V. Pai
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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
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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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
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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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
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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Ajit V. Pai
January 21, 2020

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

Dear Senator Udall:

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