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For Immediate Release

**CHAIRMAN PAI PROPOSES UPDATING TV WHITE SPACE RULES
TO EXPAND CONNECTIVITY FOR RURAL AMERICANS**

*Use of Spectrum Between TV Channels Would Provide Improved Broadband
Coverage for Americans While Also Ensuring Broadcast Stations are Protected*

WASHINGTON, February 5, 2020—Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai today proposed providing additional opportunities for unlicensed white space devices to deliver wireless broadband services in rural areas. Such devices operate in portions of the broadcast television bands (channels 2-35) and spectrum not being used for authorized services. Chairman Pai is seeking to spur the continued growth of these devices to provide broadband service to rural and underserved communities. The FCC will vote on his proposal, which he shared this morning with his fellow Commissioners, at the Commission’s monthly Open Meeting on February 28.

“TV white spaces can play a critical role in providing broadband services to rural and underserved areas,” said Chairman Pai. “I saw the promise of this technology in South Boston, a town in rural Virginia, where I met a student who said getting Internet access in his home was a game-changer. The FCC has taken steps to enable the use of white spaces over the years, and this new proposal would further help bridge the digital divide while protecting TV stations.”

White space devices can be used to provide a variety of wireless services, including broadband. Specifically, Chairman Pai is proposing to permit higher transmit power and higher antennas for fixed white space devices in rural areas. If adopted, these changes would allow white space devices to reach users at greater distances, thus enabling improved broadband coverage. Higher power would also enable signals to better penetrate foliage, buildings, and other obstacles. Additionally, his proposal would permit higher power mobile operations within geofenced areas and proposes rule revisions to facilitate the development of new and innovative narrowband Internet of Things-based services.

Because white space device operations must protect other authorized services from interference, Chairman Pai is also proposing to increase the minimum required separation distances for white space devices operating at higher power.

If this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is adopted on February 28, the public will have the opportunity to provide feedback prior to the Commission adopting final rules.

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