The Honorable Antonio Delgado  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1007 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Delgado:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

In January 2017, in the Commission’s first vote after I became Chairman, the agency granted New York State’s petition for a waiver of the Connect America Phase II auction program rules in order to coordinate funding between the federal Universal Service Fund and the state’s New NY Broadband Program to aid the deployment of broadband infrastructure to unserved areas of rural New York. I am pleased that we were able to partner with the State of New York to bring digital opportunity to many rural residents of the Empire State.

As you know, at the FCC’s January 2020 meeting, we will be voting on rules to establish the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund to target support to high-cost areas that lack access to fixed voice and 25/3 Mbps broadband. Phase I will allocate support to wholly unserved census blocks—that is, those areas where our existing data tell us there is no 25/3 Mbps service at all. In parallel, Commission staff are working to implement the Digital Opportunity Data Collection, the Commission’s new granular, precise broadband mapping initiative that will enable us to know areas that are partially served. This approach will enable the Commission to move expeditiously to serve the areas we know are unserved in Phase I, and then, in Phase II, target the coverage gaps, including unserved locations in partially served areas (as determined by the Digital Opportunity Data Collection) and areas not won in Phase I.

With respect to your concern about how the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund will impact New York, the draft report and order contained some overly broad language on that issue. I am pleased to inform you that this language will be removed from the item, and that the areas in New York eligible for Phase I of the program will be determined by the same neutral principles applicable to other states. While this of course does not guarantee that any particular area will be eligible for support, it ensures that the Commission’s eligibility criteria are applied evenly across the country.
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,

[Signature]

Ant V. Pai
The Honorable Paul Tonko  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2463 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Tonko:

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Sincerely,

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

Dear Congresswoman Meng:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 30, 2020

The Honorable Eliot L. Engel  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2462 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Engel:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Sean Patrick Maloney  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1027 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Maloney:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 30, 2020

The Honorable Brian Higgins
U.S. House of Representatives
2459 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Higgins:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 30, 2020

The Honorable John Katko  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1620 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC  20515

Dear Congressman Katko:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Tom Suozzi  
U.S. House of Representatives  
226 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC  20515

Dear Congressman Suozzi:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 30, 2020

The Honorable Max Rose  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1529 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Rose:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 30, 2020

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

Dear Congressman Morelle:  

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 30, 2020

The Honorable Anthony Brindisi
U.S. House of Representatives
329 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC  20515

Dear Congressman Brindisi:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

[Signature]

Art V. Pai
January 30, 2020

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2365 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Lowey:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Elise Stefanik  
U.S. House of Representatives  
318 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  

Dear Congresswoman Stefanik:

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 30, 2020

The Honorable Kathleen Rice  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1508 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Rice:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

In January 2017, in the Commission’s first vote after I became Chairman, the agency granted New York State’s petition for a waiver of the Connect America Phase II auction program rules in order to coordinate funding between the federal Universal Service Fund and the state’s New NY Broadband Program to aid the deployment of broadband infrastructure to unserved areas of rural New York. I am pleased that we were able to partner with the State of New York to bring digital opportunity to many rural residents of the Empire State.

As you know, at the FCC’s January 2020 meeting, we will be voting on rules to establish the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund to target support to high-cost areas that lack access to fixed voice and 25/3 Mbps broadband. Phase I will allocate support to wholly unserved census blocks—that is, those areas where our existing data tell us there is no 25/3 Mbps service at all. In parallel, Commission staff are working to implement the Digital Opportunity Data Collection, the Commission’s new granular, precise broadband mapping initiative that will enable us to know areas that are partially served. This approach will enable the Commission to move expeditiously to serve the areas we know are unserved in Phase I, and then, in Phase II, target the coverage gaps, including unserved locations in partially served areas (as determined by the Digital Opportunity Data Collection) and areas not won in Phase I.

With respect to your concern about how the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund will impact New York, the draft report and order contained some overly broad language on that issue. I am pleased to inform you that this language will be removed from the item, and that the areas in New York eligible for Phase I of the program will be determined by the same neutral principles applicable to other states. While this of course does not guarantee that any particular area will be eligible for support, it ensures that the Commission’s eligibility criteria are applied evenly across the country.
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,

[Signature]

Ajit V. Pai
January 30, 2020

The Honorable Jose E. Serrano  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2354 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Serrano:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 30, 2020

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
U.S. House of Representatives
2109 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Nadler:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai
January 30, 2020

The Honorable Nydia M. Velazquez  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2302 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC  20515

Dear Congresswoman Velazquez:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Jit V. Pai

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January 30, 2020

The Honorable Gregory W. Meeks
U.S. House of Representatives
2234 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Meeks:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai

Ajit V. Pai
The Honorable Peter T. King
U.S. House of Representatives
339 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman King:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications 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.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai

Ajit V. Pai
January 30, 2020

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney
U.S. House of Representatives
2308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Maloney:

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