



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

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February 14, 2020

The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai:


We write to direct your attention to a request for a waiver filed with the Federal Communications Commission by the Grand Canyon Unified School District (GCUSD) on July 30, 2019.

Located in Grand Canyon Village, the GCUSD is the only unified K-12 school district in the country within a national park. Due to its rural and remote location, the school district has inadequate internet service, amounting to the equivalent of 10.5 Mbps. The lack of reasonable internet access severely disadvantages the school district's 300 students.

In March 2018, GCUSD filed an E-rate application to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), seeking funding for a lit fiber service to provide 200 Mbps symmetric broadband service. In January 2019, GCUSD received a funding commitment decision letter from USAC that determined the project deadline as June 30, 2019. GCUSD has expressed to us that this delay in the notification for their award funding, as well as the extensive work necessary to lay the fiber, caused significant delays in the project. They note that the permitting alone for the 67-mile fiber project was estimated to take nine months. When the district requested an extension of the project deadline, the USAC denied the request.

As representatives of rural communities across Arizona, we support localities receiving the funding resources they need to deploy broadband infrastructure to their communities. 21st century connectivity is no longer optional; it is essential to help close the digital divide. The E-rate program allows online education to enhance students' learning and, as such, we respectfully request a status report on this appeal, as well as a commitment that the commission will complete its review within the next 30 days.

Sincerely,


Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator


Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress


Martha McSally
United States Senator


Ann Kirkpartick
Member of Congress