

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

Received & Inspected

FEB 03 2020

FCC Mailroom

January 28, 2020

72

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

We would like to thank you and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as a whole, for your strong leadership to spur and support broadband deployment to every part of the nation. Our constituents benefit through connected communities as the promise of broadband underpins the global digital economy.

With the FCC in the process of finalizing the rules for how it will distribute more than \$16 billion dollars in broadband support through the first phase of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF), we are encouraged by the FCC's initiative to advance rural broadband deployment through this groundbreaking program. While we appreciate the Commission's focused efforts to produce a timely order and the promise of a successful 2020 auction, it has come to our attention that potential participants in the auction share concerns regarding the need to significantly reduce the burdens of the letter of credit requirements. We are concerned the order as drafted would severely limit, and in some cases absolutely prevent, provider participation.

We share the FCC's goal to effectively manage risk in this program, however, the FCC should explore alternate risk management measures that would maximize responsible participation in this program, not inhibit it. Rural Americans are counting on the FCC to get this right.

We therefore respectfully request the FCC restructure the RDOF's approach to prudential risk management in a way that ensures providers are able to responsibly participate to the fullest extent possible in this historic, once in a generation program. We are on the cusp of extending valuable broadband service to the more than 6 million locations the FCC has made eligible for RDOF. Without changes to the FCC's LOC requirements, potentially millions of rural Americans, my constituents, will risk being left without access to the critical broadband services they need and the RDOF has the promise to deliver.

Sincerely,

John Boozman
United States Senator

Kevin Cramer
United States Senator

Bill Cassidy, M.D.

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

Roy Blunt

Roy Blunt
United States Senator

Susan M. Collins

Susan Collins
Member of Congress

Angus King

Angus King
United States Senator

Ben Sasse

Ben Sasse
United States Senator