

BRAD R. WENSTRUP

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COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND
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Congress of the United States
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January 15, 2020

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

Dear Chairman Pai,

I am writing to thank you and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for your efforts to expand broadband to Ohioans who don't yet have adequate access to the internet. As you well know, many of my constituents do not have reliable access to broadband internet.

I am concerned that the "digital divide" is holding back too many students, seniors, farmers, and small businesses in rural Ohio. These citizens deserve the same opportunities as Ohioans and other Americans living in more densely populated areas. In order for that to happen, Washington must continue to prioritize expanding access to broadband in rural communities.

Recently, my office met with representatives from Watch Communications, an internet service provider working to deploy broadband services in my state. They are supported by funding from the CAF-II auction, as well as Connect Americans Now, a coalition of organizations who advocate for expanding broadband connectivity. I understand that Watch Communications is seeking to expand access to broadband in rural America by utilizing a mixed-technology approach that includes TV white space technology (TVWS).

From what I understand, TVWS has the potential to be an important tool in eliminating the digital divide in our rural communities. TVWS signals can travel vast distances and penetrate barriers like hills, trees, and walls that make connecting rural areas so difficult. I am encouraged that a strategy utilizing TVWS, along with other technologies, has the potential to reduce the cost of eliminating the digital divide in rural America.

I applaud you and the Commission for your dedication and your work to clear the regulatory barriers to rural broadband innovation. I encourage the Commission to build on the progress that has already been achieved by issuing a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to better enable the deployment of TVWS in broadband networks, while also ensuring that current licensed users are protected from interference.

Rural America cannot wait any longer for access to broadband internet. I thank the Commission for making this a top priority.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brad R. Wenstrup". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brad" and last name "Wenstrup" clearly legible.

Brad R. Wenstrup
Member of Congress