

Received & Inspected

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March 31, 2020

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, information is one of our most important tools. It can be used to ensure our citizens remain healthy and safe and that protocols are followed in order to lessen the severity of this public health crisis. In Maryland, Governor Hogan's daily press conferences are one of the most important sources of information. His directives to engage in social distancing, stay at home, and close non-essential businesses will keep Marylanders safe from this disease.

Unfortunately, I have heard from my constituents that Garrett County in Maryland is unable to receive this life-saving advice from our elected officials. Garrett is served by Pennsylvania's television market, and is thus barred from receiving Maryland public channels. The steps being taken by Pennsylvania's leaders are simply not as relevant to our constituents in Garrett County as those being taken by Maryland's own elected leaders. Maryland citizens need to have the opportunity to be informed of these official directives as the consequences of non-compliance, both in health and legal liability, are serious. Access to Maryland news and information via television is even more important given broadband access in Garrett County is so poor; watching via livestream or other internet sources is difficult or impossible.

Therefore, I respectfully ask that you expeditiously review Garrett County's television market, and work with state and local leaders to solve this issue. If you do not have sufficient regulatory authority to solve this issue, I request your assistance in developing the necessary statutory changes to allow this important policy change.

Sincerely,

David Trone
Member of Congress