

Joseph D. Morelle
25th District, New York

Committee on Rules
Committee on Budget
Committee on Education and Labor



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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 17, 2020

Chairman Ajit Pai
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

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RE: Letter of Support

Chairman Pai,

I write in support of the proposal from Rochester Regional Health for the Federal Communications Commission's COVID-19 Telehealth Program, established by Congress as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

As you are undoubtedly aware, New York State is currently the epicenter of the COVID-19 crisis, with more confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus in NYS than anywhere else in the U.S. While much of the national focus is understandably on New York City, Upstate NY is experiencing its own unique challenges in relation to COVID-19, particularly with regard to telehealth and telemedicine services. As a regional health system serving a large geographic territory, RRH not only serves hundreds-of-thousands of individuals each year from low-income communities within the City of Rochester, but thousands more via its rural hospitals in Genesee, Ontario, and Wayne Counties. These communities are predominantly low-income and contain high concentrations of senior citizens, the demographic most at-risk of COVID-19. Because of the rural setting of these hospitals, reliable technological infrastructure and broadband connectivity is often an issue.

In order to ensure that senior citizens and other at-risk populations served by RRH can continue to receive essential healthcare services, RRH is asking for assistance in quickly strengthening its telehealth infrastructure so it can serve more patients without the need for in-person medical care, which greatly exacerbates the likelihood of spreading COVID-19. This effort requires the steadfast dedication of RRH's IT professionals and frontline healthcare workers, but also federal resources and community support.

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Thank you for your attention to Rochester Regional Health's application for this funding opportunity; it is imperative for our region to secure resources that will allow us to quickly scale-up our telehealth capabilities. If you have any questions regarding RRH's request for funds, please feel free to reach out to my office directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph D. Morelle".

Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress