

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

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April 3, 2020

The Honorable Ajit V. Pai, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

As you know, President Trump signed S. 1822, the Broadband DATA Act, into law on March 23, 2020.¹ We write to ensure that as the FCC begins the mapping efforts required under this legislation, you include community anchor institutions such as health care facilities, schools, and libraries. These institutions provide critical connectivity for the communities in which they operate but are often overlooked.

Congresswoman Anna G. Eshoo cosponsored H.R. 4229, the House companion to S. 1822. At her request, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce included specific language to ensure that community anchor institutions are included in the mapping efforts required by the legislation. The Committee Report associated with the House bill includes the following important instructions for the Commission:

These reporting standards should apply to all broadband serviceable locations, including residences, businesses, *and community anchor institutions*.²

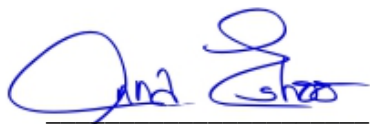
Senator Edward J. Markey cosponsored S. 1822. On March 11, 2020, he submitted a statement to the Congressional Record in favor of S. 1822 in which articulated the following:

[T]he FCC must make sure to *include anchor institutions* in its list of serviceable locations so that our broadband maps accurately cover anchor institutions as well as residences.³

We're also enclosing a letter from the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition that explains the necessity for the inclusion of community anchor institutions in the mapping efforts required by this legislation.

We trust the Commission will ensure that community anchor institutions are included in the mapping efforts required by the Broadband DATA Act.

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Michael O'Rielly, Commissioner
The Honorable Brendan Carr, Commissioner
The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner
The Honorable Geoffrey Starks, Commissioner

¹ Public Law No. 116-130

² H. Rept 116-350 (December 16, 2019) at p. 14,
<https://www.congress.gov/116/crpt/hrpt350/CRPT-116hrpt350.pdf> (Emphasis added)

³ Sen. Edward J. Markey (MA), “Broadband Deployment Accuracy and Technological Availability Act”, *Congressional Record* 166: 47 (March 11, 2020) at p. S1699,
<https://www.congress.gov/116/crec/2020/03/11/CREC-2020-03-11-pt1-PgS1699.pdf> (Emphasis added)



November 18, 2019

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone and Ranking Member Walden:

The Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition (“SHLB Coalition” or “SHLB”)¹ asks you to ensure that community anchor institutions are included in the broadband mapping legislation, H.R. 4229, the “Broadband Deployment Accuracy and Technological Availability (DATA) Act”.

Community anchor institutions – which include schools, libraries, health care providers, higher education, public safety and other community support organizations – provide essential services to their communities using broadband technologies. Schools use broadband for distance learning, and most teachers assign homework that requires students to use the Internet. Libraries provide no-fee Internet access to their patrons and often offer hot spot lending programs to their communities. Health care providers need high-capacity broadband to transmit medical images and electronic medical records, and to provide telemedicine services to rural residents. For these reasons, Goal #4 in the National Broadband Plan calls for anchor institutions to have gigabit broadband by the year 2020.²

Unfortunately, the needs of anchor institutions for high-quality broadband are sometimes overlooked. For instance, the FCC’s recent proposal to create a Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) repeatedly refers to “homes and small businesses” without any mention of anchor institutions.³

We support the DATA Act’s provisions that require the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to collect and disseminate granular broadband availability data to create coverage maps based on a serviceable location fabric map regarding fixed broadband. Unfortunately, the

¹ The SHLB Coalition is a broad-based coalition of 177 organizations that share the goal of promoting open, affordable, high-quality broadband for anchor institutions and their communities. SHLB Coalition members include representatives of schools, libraries, health care providers and networks, state broadband offices, private sector companies, state and national research and education networks, and consumer organizations. See <http://shlb.org/about/coalition-members> for a current list of SHLB Coalition members.

² <https://www.fcc.gov/general/national-broadband-plan>.

³ In re Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, WC Docket No. 19-126, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 19-77 (Rel. Aug. 2, 2019) available at <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-19-77A1.pdf>.

DATA Act does not define the word “location”, which leaves open the possibility that anchor institutions could be left out of the FCC’s mapping effort. Our concern is that the needs of anchor institutions might be overlooked in the FCC’s implementation unless it receives specific direction from Congress. Including anchor institutions in this legislation would ensure that the FCC gathers and analyzes broadband data regarding anchor institution connectivity to help meet the National Broadband Plan Goal #4.

We urge you to include language to clarify the definition of “location” to ensure that the FCC collects and disseminates broadband data regarding community anchor institutions in addition to business and residential consumers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Windhausen, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Windhausen, Jr.
Executive Director
Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition
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cc:

The Honorable Mike Doyle
The Honorable Bob Latta
The Honorable Anna Eshoo