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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC RELEASES UPDATED LIST OF ELIGIBLE AREAS FOR  
RURAL DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FUND PHASE I AUCTION**

***Denies Challenges Lacking Proper Documentation, Including Those Filed by  
Frontier and FDF Communications, and Grants Charter's Waiver Request***

WASHINGTON, June 25, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission's Rural Broadband Auctions Task Force, Wireline Competition Bureau, and Office of Economics and Analytics today released a Public Notice announcing a list of 5,392,530 unserved locations deemed eligible for bidding in the \$16 billion Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Phase I Auction that begins October 29. The Public Notice updates a preliminary list released March 17, 2020, which was followed by a limited challenge process.

"We're on track and on time with our ambitious schedule to move forward as quickly as possible to get funding out to unserved parts of America and close the digital divide," said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. "We've designed this auction with incentives for bidders to build high-performance networks in areas that we know don't have broadband service so we can bring digital opportunity to millions of rural Americans. Closing the digital divide is my top priority, and it's even more critical now as so much of American life has moved online, from jobs to telehealth to staying in touch with families and friends. Today's announcement provides the information companies need to prepare as we move toward the opening of the window on July 1 for bidders to file their applications to participate in the Phase I auction."

The Commission conducted a limited challenge process that gave parties an opportunity to identify by April 10, 2020, census blocks that fell into one of three categories: (1) census blocks that have become served with voice and 25/3 Mbps broadband service since June 30, 2019; (2) census blocks that have been awarded funding by a federal or state broadband subsidy to offer broadband service at 25/3 Mbps or better and for which funding has already been paid or committed; and (3) census blocks within a rate-of-return carrier's service area where it does not expect to extend broadband in satisfaction of its universal service deployment obligations.

Among other decisions, the Task Force, Bureau, and Office denied a challenge filed by Frontier Communications for 16,987 blocks where it claimed it provided service of 25/3 Mbps or better broadband service. Given the numerous and significant concerns in the record regarding the validity of Frontier's filing, including its own admission that it had misfiled its June 2019 data, errors in its challenge that it sought to revise, and inconsistent explanations for its challenge, the Commission denied Frontier's challenge. The Commission also denied a challenge filed by FDF Communications to exclude 1,664 census blocks in Missouri and 577 blocks in Arkansas from the eligible bidding areas. Significant concerns were raised in the record about the services that FDF Communications was offering in the areas it challenged. The Commission rejected other challenges by Arrowhead Electric Cooperation, Inland

Telephone Company, Northwest Fiber, Edge Broadband, Mobius Communications Company, and LakeNet LLC that sought to exclude areas from the auction.

In a separate order, the Bureau granted Charter Communications' waiver request to exclude 2,127 census blocks in New York from the eligible areas list because the company will deploy broadband in those locations pursuant to a settlement reached with the State of New York. The Task Force, Bureau, and Office also granted most of the challenges that FCC Form 477 filers submitted identifying census blocks that started receiving voice and 25/3 Mbps or better broadband service since June 30, 2019.

The final list of eligible areas will be released no later than three weeks prior to the October 29 start date for bidding. Commission staff will closely scrutinize auction applications to ensure that all applicants are proposing to use technologies that will be successful in providing mass market retail broadband to consumers to ensure taxpayer funding is not wasted. Phase II of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund will make available at least \$4.4 billion, in addition to unallocated funds from Phase I, to target partially served areas using precise, granular broadband coverage data being developed in the Commission's Digital Opportunity Data Collection proceeding, along with areas not won in the Phase I auction.

Communities and individuals with questions about the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund can contact the FCC's Rural Broadband Auctions Task Force at [ruralbroadband@fcc.gov](mailto:ruralbroadband@fcc.gov). Service providers seeking information about applying to participate in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction can contact [Auction904@fcc.gov](mailto:Auction904@fcc.gov).

The state-by-state list of updated eligible locations is below:

<b>State Name</b>	<b>Eligible Locations</b>
Alabama	202,369
Arizona	131,949
Arkansas	201,944
California	425,533
Colorado	78,397
Connecticut	3,281
Delaware	7,757
Florida	147,162
Georgia	184,019
Hawaii	8,081
Idaho	40,921
Illinois	166,777
Indiana	162,980
Iowa	55,017
Kansas	46,827
Kentucky	99,315
Louisiana	176,951
Maine	27,967
Maryland	40,406
Massachusetts	29,491
Michigan	253,386
Minnesota	148,718
Mississippi	221,685

Missouri	200,336
Montana	46,156
Nebraska	43,445
Nevada	31,623
New Hampshire	18,243
New Jersey	11,933
New Mexico	64,978
New York	47,024
North Carolina	163,277
North Dakota	3,025
Ohio	191,832
Oklahoma	127,081
Oregon	82,659
Pennsylvania	190,325
Rhode Island	3,428
South Carolina	109,301
South Dakota	10,738
Tennessee	169,750
Texas	310,322
Utah	10,784
Vermont	19,468
Virginia	190,137
Washington	103,155
West Virginia	121,013
Wisconsin	241,341
Wyoming	19,139

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*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*