



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 21, 2020

The Honorable Chris Stewart
U.S. House of Representatives
323 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

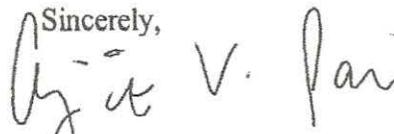
Dear Congresswoman Stewart:

Thank you for your letter regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on broadcast station licensees. I agree that local radio and television broadcasters are providing essential information to listeners and viewers during this unprecedented time. I have publicly commended the industry for all that they have done—and continue to do—to serve the public. At the same time, these stations are facing financial uncertainty because they rely primarily on over-the-air advertising as a revenue source.

The Commission has taken steps during this crisis to ease regulatory burdens, as appropriate, on the entities that we regulate. Unfortunately, the collection of regulatory fees is one area where the statute is explicit. We must assess fees that can reasonably be expected to equal the amount of funds appropriated by Congress and we must collect the fees by September 30 of each year. We must allocate the fees fairly across all of the fee payor entities. And we cannot exempt entities that do not already have an exemption in the statute, such as the *de minimis* exemption of \$1,000.

There is some flexibility, however, to take into account an entity's financial circumstances. Specifically, we have the authority to offer extended payment terms at nominal interest rates for regulatory fee payors that demonstrate they face significant financial challenges, just like we did for some regulatees impacted by hurricanes in 2017 and 2018. We have sought comment on such an approach in our annual Regulatory Fees Notice of Proposed Rulemaking adopted on May 13. Alternatively, Congress could choose to modify the existing statutory language to provide additional flexibility—including providing an extension of time to file beyond September 30.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 21, 2020

The Honorable Ann McLane Kuster
U.S. House of Representatives
320 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

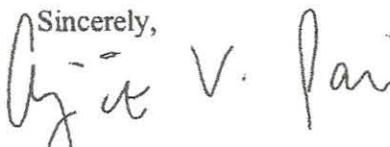
Dear Congresswoman Kuster:

Thank you for your letter regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on broadcast station licensees. I agree that local radio and television broadcasters are providing essential information to listeners and viewers during this unprecedented time. I have publicly commended the industry for all that they have done—and continue to do—to serve the public. At the same time, these stations are facing financial uncertainty because they rely primarily on over-the-air advertising as a revenue source.

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