



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

August 13, 2020

The Honorable Tim Kaine
United States Senate
231 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kaine:

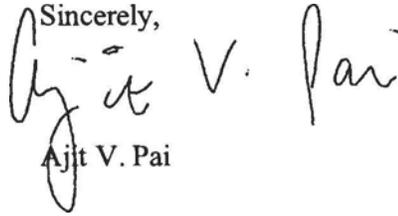
Thank you for your letter regarding the 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Priority Window. Closing the digital divide is my top priority as Chairman. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. I also fully recognize the importance of broadband in Tribal communities.

The 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Priority Window, which opened February 3, is a unique opportunity for eligible Tribal entities to obtain licenses for prime mid-band spectrum that can help Tribes address their connectivity needs. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the application window has been extended an additional 30-days until 6 pm EDT on September 2, 2020. Tribal entities have already submitted 299 applications. And Commission staff have answered hundreds of inquiries from Tribes and other interested parties about the filing window.

This 30-day extension strikes an appropriate balance between providing more time for additional Tribal entities to apply and not unduly delaying the grant of licenses to those that have already applied. The Commission cannot start the process of issuing licenses to eligible applicants until after the window closes, because we will not know the extent of mutually exclusive applications for as long as the window is open. A much longer extension would therefore substantially delay our award of licenses to Tribal entities and thus delay their ability to use this spectrum to connect those consumers living on Tribal lands. Moreover, in light of the simplified application process as well as the extensive outreach done by Commission staff (including contacting every single federally recognized Tribe and Alaska Native Village the month before the window opened, first by phone or other direct contact, and a second time by letter), a lengthy extension of the deadline is unnecessary, as evidenced by the large number of applications we've already received.

Commission staff continues to work hard on this initiative, enabling eligible Tribal entities to apply and avail themselves of its benefits as soon as possible. We encourage potential Tribal applicants to make inquiries via e-mail to RuralTribalWindow@fcc.gov so that Commission staff can answer any questions they might have about the application process.

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

Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF
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August 13, 2020

The Honorable A. Donald McEachin
U.S. House of Representatives
314 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman McEachin:

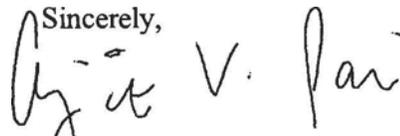
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OFFICE OF
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August 13, 2020

The Honorable Robert C. Scott
U.S. House of Representatives
1201 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Scott:

Thank you for your letter regarding the 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Priority Window. Closing the digital divide is my top priority as Chairman. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. I also fully recognize the importance of broadband in Tribal communities.

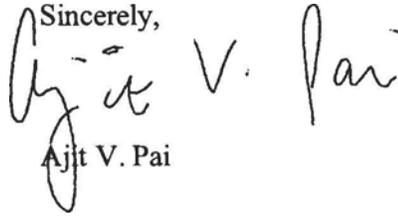
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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August 13, 2020

The Honorable Abigail Spanberger
U.S. House of Representatives
1239 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Spanberger:

Thank you for your letter regarding the 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Priority Window. Closing the digital divide is my top priority as Chairman. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. I also fully recognize the importance of broadband in Tribal communities.

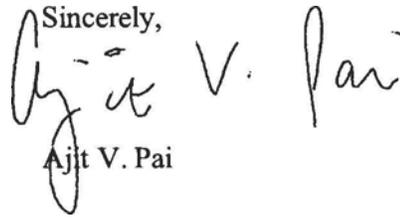
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August 13, 2020

The Honorable Mark Warner
United States Senate
703 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Warner:

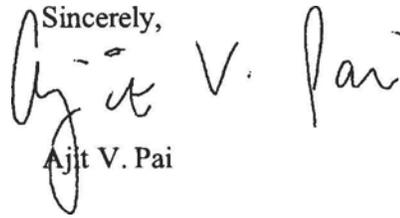
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The Honorable Rob Wittman
U.S. House of Representatives
2055 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

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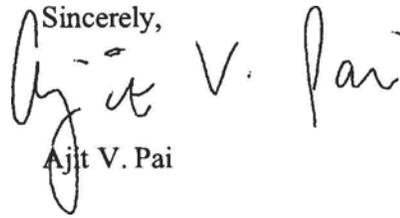
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