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For Immediate Release

**FCC ANNOUNCES CLOSE OF FIRST-EVER RURAL TRIBAL
PRIORITY WINDOW FOR SPECTRUM**

***Hundreds of Tribal Entities Participate in Unique Spectrum Opportunity
in the 2.5 GHz Band***

WASHINGTON, September 3, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission’s first-ever spectrum priority filing window for rural Tribes closed yesterday, September 2, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. EDT. This 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Priority Window presented a unique opportunity for eligible Tribal entities to obtain overlay licenses for prime mid-band spectrum covering rural Tribal lands to help address their connectivity needs and close the digital divide in Indian country. The window opened on February 3, 2020, and the FCC received more than 400 applications from Tribal entities throughout the country.

“Tribes showed tremendous interest in the 2.5 GHz band over the past several months, and I am pleased by the large number of applications the Commission has received. We are now a step closer to enabling Tribal entities to obtain this spectrum for free and quickly put it to use to bring service to rural Tribal lands,” said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. “Too often, Tribal communities are on the wrong side of the digital divide, but we’ve aimed to change that through this first-of-its-kind spectrum opportunity. I’d like to thank the staff of our Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and Office of Native Affairs and Policy for all of their hard work—from contacting every federally-recognized Tribe multiple times before the window opened to participating in dozens of outreach events to fielding hundreds of inquiries, they have done a phenomenal job to ensure eligible Tribes can seize this opportunity to bridge the digital divide.”

On July 31, the FCC’s Wireless Telecommunications Bureau extended the deadline by 30 days due to the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing more time for Tribes to apply while not unduly delaying the grant of licenses to those that had already applied. FCC staff will begin reviewing the filed applications immediately, and will request additional information from applicants where necessary, seek public comment on the applications, and process applications. Licenses issued through the Rural Tribal Priority Window will give Tribal entities access to spectrum that they can use to connect consumers living on rural Tribal lands. Any remaining unassigned 2.5 GHz spectrum will be made available by auction to facilitate the rapid deployment of wireless networks across America. That auction is expected to begin in the first half of 2021.

For more information, visit www.fcc.gov/RuralTribalWindow.

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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).