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**MIKE QUIGLEY**  
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
5TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT  
CHAIRMAN  
TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT,  
AND RELATED AGENCIES  
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PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE  
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STRATEGIC TECHNOLOGIES AND ADVANCED RESEARCH  
COUNTERTERRORISM, COUNTERINTELLIGENCE, AND  
COUNTERPROLIFERATION

June 26, 2020

544

The Honorable Ajit Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th St SW  
Washington DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

As the United States battles multiple serious economic, medical, and civic crises, tens of millions of Americans have come to rely on broadband connectivity like never before. Internet access enables remote work, distance learning, and telemedicine while ensuring that Americans can stay in contact with their loved ones and access essential news and information.

I am heartened by the widespread voluntary adoption by numerous broadband providers of the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Keep Americans Connected Pledge to not terminate service to customers because of their inability to pay, to waive late fees, and to provide access to Wi-Fi hotspots. However, as the pledge nears its June 30 expiration date, I remain concerned by the FCC's lack of action to use every one of its authorities to provide certainty and support to broadband customers.

Even if the FCC believes that a further extension of the pledge is not feasible, there are many additional steps it can take. For example, it can ensure that broadband companies continue to offer pre-pandemic pricing, to prevent providers from taking advantage of the current situation to raise prices or sunset more affordable tiers of service. The Commission can provide guidance to providers on eliminating the use of credit checks and other measures that perpetuate harmful economic and social disparities. The FCC can reverse its postponement of the effective date of section 642 of the Television Viewer Protection Act of 2019—a baffling decision that, while legal, prevents customers from receiving monetary relief for unjustified equipment costs and allows large corporations to continue to squeeze American consumers for a few more dollars, when millions of those consumers are facing unprecedented financial hardship. And the FCC can expedite its consumer complaint review process and accelerate enforcement investigations to ensure that companies live up to their commitments and to provide hard-stricken Americans with timely relief.

Perhaps most importantly, the Lifeline program has never been more essential. We know that combating the current coronavirus pandemic is a marathon, not a sprint. It is imperative that the FCC take every step feasible to expand Lifeline access during this crisis. We ask the FCC to extend its current waivers expediting access to Lifeline for the duration of the pandemic

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emergency, delay changes to minimum service standards for Lifeline broadband service and any reductions in current support levels, proactively engage with States and other Federal agencies to expedite Lifeline verification processes, and actively work with civil society on campaigns to increase Lifeline registration. This is also the time for the FCC to consider significant, permanent expansions of Lifeline and E-rate to improve the availability and quality of service.

As you stated in your recent letter, “the times have required bold action.” Yet over the past three years, the FCC has aggressively backed away from its consumer protection responsibilities and repeatedly undermined the Lifeline program. The current situation highlights just how wrong the FCC has been. Its current policies exacerbate racial and social disparities that limit economic resiliency and increase vulnerability to COVID-19. We look forward to seeing just how bold the FCC can be.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Quigley".

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Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress