

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

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December 22, 2020

The Honorable, Ajit Pai, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street Northwest  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

We write to you today to advocate for stringent oversight of the Phase I Rural Development Opportunity Fund (RDOF) auction conducted by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

A reliable high-speed internet connection is no longer a luxury for households but a necessity for our communities to keep pace with global commerce, educate our children, and bring health services to remote areas. The RDOF auction represented one of this year's best opportunities for our rural unserved and underserved communities to gain a lifeline to reliable broadband internet. While we continue to have high hopes for a successful auction and buildout, we caution that for it to be considered as such will require strict oversight.

As you begin to review long-form applications we believe there are several areas to which the FCC should pay close attention to ensure submissions are more than capable of meeting obligations set forth by the auction.

We believe that the FCC should carefully consider a submission's ability to meet the performance tiers obligated in a winning bid. While we understand an "all the above" technological approach will be required to decrease the digital divide, we believe that the FCC can ensure that these technologies have been real-world tested and capable of providing and maintaining the speeds guaranteed in their submissions.

There is little time to waste in deployment of broadband, and delays are critical. We encourage the FCC to require detailed deployment schedules for review to ensure submissions can meet the time frame outlined by the auction.

Furthermore, expanding broadband access to rural communities is a capital-intensive venture, which is why the RDOF auction is necessary to accelerate broadband's viability in rural America. The FCC should review relevant financial documents concerning a bid's ability to raise the financial capital necessary to complete a successful buildout, without undue reliance on future government subsidies, while meeting the buildout schedule.

Our communities' futures are reliant on the success of the RDOF auction and the proper oversight of winning submissions. We thank you for your attention and look forward to continuing to work in partnership to end the digital divide.

Sincerely,



Robert Aderholt  
Member of Congress



Bradley Byrne  
Member of Congress



Marth Roby  
Member of Congress



Mike Rogers  
Member of Congress



Mo Brooks  
Member of Congress



Gary Palmer  
Member of Congress



Terri Sewell  
Member of Congress