



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Roger Williams  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1708 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Williams:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

As you note, the RDOF auction was held late last year. A total of 180 bidders were preliminarily awarded funding in the auction to deploy high-speed broadband to over 5.2 million unserved homes and businesses. After these winning bidders were announced, they were given the opportunity to divide their bids among approved providers, allowing bidding consortia to distribute winning bids among its members. As a result, 417 providers ultimately filed long-form applications with the Commission.

However, too little work was done on the maps prepared for the auction, resulting in a rash of initial funding decisions supporting areas where broadband is already present as well as in questionable locations like parking lots, traffic medians, and international airports. In light of this, FCC staff took a series of steps to clean up the program before funding was made available to successful bidders.

First, following the filing of long-form applications at the start of this year, each applicant was subjected to a careful technical, financial, and legal review. This is important because any further commitment will result in federal payment obligations for the next ten years. As a result, the FCC must be assured that the bidder is actually capable of both deployment and operation and that the technology they have chosen to use will deliver the speeds promised. To make this

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Third, every bidder that won a preliminary commitment in the auction was required to secure status as an eligible telecommunications carrier in the state where they intend to receive support. This is a requirement that goes beyond RDOF; it is a necessary precondition for the receipt of universal service funds from the high-cost program under the Communications Act. Every bidder had until June of this year to secure this designation before the relevant state public service commissions. Those that did not diligently pursue this designation and in the process demonstrated a lack of commitment to actually deploy service were removed from the program. These failures to diligently pursue applications amounted to removing \$344 million in preliminary awards from the program.

With these clean up measures now underway, FCC staff have been processing all remaining applications as quickly as possible. More than 50 staff from across the agency, including engineers, attorneys, and policy specialists, have been at work on this effort. The amount of time required to complete review on any individual application varies considerably, depending on the complexity of the application and the responsiveness of the applicant to staff requests for additional information. However, each applicant must meet all legal, financial, and technical program requirements to ensure they are reasonably capable of deploying service to all required locations within the program timeline. To date, the Commission has announced over \$1.7 billion in funding long-form applications of 151 providers in 40 states. To put this in context, this is more funding than was approved for the entire Connect America Fund-II auction, which was the biggest broadband reverse auction before RDOF. Furthermore, now that many of the early efforts to resolve outstanding issues with waste, fraud, and abuse are complete, additional funding decisions will be announced shortly, and we are releasing public notices authorizing funds on a rolling basis.

I appreciate your interest in the RDOF program and how it can be used to help address the digital divide in rural communities. I hope this information is helpful. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Ed Case  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2210 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Case:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
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OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable David Trone  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1110 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Trone:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
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OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick  
U.S. House of Representatives  
271 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Fitzpatrick:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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Jessica Rosenworcel





FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Ralph Norman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
569 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Norman:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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Sincerely,



Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Ted Budd  
U.S. House of Representatives  
103 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Budd:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
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OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Mariannette Miller-Meeks  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1716 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Miller-Meeks:

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Dear Representative Gonzales:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

As you note, the RDOF auction was held late last year. A total of 180 bidders were preliminarily awarded funding in the auction to deploy high-speed broadband to over 5.2 million unserved homes and businesses. After these winning bidders were announced, they were given the opportunity to divide their bids among approved providers, allowing bidding consortia to distribute winning bids among its members. As a result, 417 providers ultimately filed long-form applications with the Commission.

However, too little work was done on the maps prepared for the auction, resulting in a rash of initial funding decisions supporting areas where broadband is already present as well as in questionable locations like parking lots, traffic medians, and international airports. In light of this, FCC staff took a series of steps to clean up the program before funding was made available to successful bidders.

First, following the filing of long-form applications at the start of this year, each applicant was subjected to a careful technical, financial, and legal review. This is important because any further commitment will result in federal payment obligations for the next ten years. As a result, the FCC must be assured that the bidder is actually capable of both deployment and operation and that the technology they have chosen to use will deliver the speeds promised. To make this

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I appreciate your interest in the RDOF program and how it can be used to help address the digital divide in rural communities. I hope this information is helpful. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Jessica Rosenworcel





FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Andrew Clyde  
U.S. House of Representatives  
521 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Clyde:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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Sincerely,



Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Elise Stefanik  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2211 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Stefanik:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Ben Cline  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2443 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Cline:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Jack Bergman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
566 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Bergman:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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Jessica Rosenworcel





FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Michelle Fischbach  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1237 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Fischbach:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Tracey Mann  
U.S. House of Representatives  
522 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Mann:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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Sincerely,



Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Jerry Carl  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1330 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Carl:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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However, too little work was done on the maps prepared for the auction, resulting in a rash of initial funding decisions supporting areas where broadband is already present as well as in questionable locations like parking lots, traffic medians, and international airports. In light of this, FCC staff took a series of steps to clean up the program before funding was made available to successful bidders.

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I appreciate your interest in the RDOF program and how it can be used to help address the digital divide in rural communities. I hope this information is helpful. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Jason Smith  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2418 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Smith:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Frank D. Lucas  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2405 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lucas:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Bob Good  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1213 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Representative Good:

Thank you for your letter regarding the review process for long-form applications in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund auction.

I believe that it is essential that we work to close the digital divide so that 100 percent of households in the United States are connected to broadband. During the pandemic, we have seen just how important affordable high-speed internet access is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses. One way policies at the Federal Communications Commission can help achieve this goal is through the high-cost program, which is part of the Universal Service Fund developed pursuant to Section 254 of the Communications Act. This program is designed to ensure that consumers in rural, insular, and high-cost areas have access to modern communications networks capable of providing voice and broadband service at rates that are reasonably comparable to those in urban areas. The RDOF auction is an outgrowth of these policies and draws on funds from the high-cost program. I support this effort but believe the program requires careful oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

December 10, 2021

The Honorable Julia Letlow  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1408 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Letlow:

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