

STATE CAPITOL  
P.O. Box 110001  
Juneau, AK 99811-0001  
907-465-3500  
fax: 907-465-3532



550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1700  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
907-269-7450  
fax 907-269-7461  
www.Gov.Alaska.Gov  
Governor@Alaska.Gov

Governor Bill Walker  
STATE OF ALASKA

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FCC Mailroom

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Ms. Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Update to Parts 2 and 25 Concerning Non-Geostationary, Fixed-Satellite Service Systems and Related Matters (IB Docket No. 16-408)

Dear Secretary Dortch:

An important priority of my administration is to find solutions to the broadband gap that exists between the urban and rural parts of Alaska. Broadband access is essential to driving growth in local economies as well as providing educational, medical, and emergency response services throughout our great state. In fact, my previous letter to the Commission illustrates that I completely support telecommunication companies increasing broadband Internet access in both rural and urban Alaska.<sup>1</sup>

However, the proposal to remove the domestic coverage requirement<sup>2</sup> goes against the public interest, especially in underserved, northern areas. The incentive for generalized non-geostationary, fixed-satellite service systems to provide service to all of Alaska in addition to the contiguous states disappears with the removal of the domestic coverage requirement. Even though there can be specialized non-geostationary, fixed-satellite service systems designed specifically to cover a specific area like Alaska, the cost of providing these specialized systems is highly prohibitive due to Alaska's geographic and environmental isolation. As a result, we do not see numerous telecommunication companies applying to provide broadband access with these systems.

What the requirement guarantees is that our state, especially the rural parts of it, are not forgotten. There are promising satellites systems, like OneWeb's, coming in the near future that intend to close the broadband gap by bringing affordable, high-speed broadband Internet access to our entire state.

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Bill Walker, Governor, State of Alaska, to the Honorable Tom Wheeler, Chairman, FCC (filed Aug. 3, 2016) (supporting the grant of OneWeb's low earth orbit, non-geostationary, fixed-satellite service system).

<sup>2</sup> Update to Parts 2 and 25 Concerning Non-Geostationary, Fixed-Satellite Service Systems and Related Matters, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 17 FCC Rcd 7809, 7844, para. 76 (2017).

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We would like to see more satellite systems follow suit, and the domestic coverage rule ensures just that. Hence, I respectfully encourage the Commission to change direction and keep the requirement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Walker". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Bill Walker  
Governor