



Chairman Ajit Pai  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW,  
Washington, DC 20554

October 10, 2017

Dear Chairman Pai,

I am writing today in response to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Public Notice which, among other things, considers changes to the E-Rate program. Before delving into my response to the proposed changes, I want to thank the FCC for your continued support for the E-Rate program and for the critical programmatic and policy changes the commission adopted in 2014. The E-Rate program provides critical discounts to assist schools (like mine) to obtain affordable telecommunications and internet access.

The Mono County Office of Education serves our rural families, and provides high quality, high speed Internet service for every public school and public library in the county. The use of e-rate funding is absolutely critical for our Internet for schools and public libraries. We are unique because our office manages both public schools and public libraries. Because of our rural county, several of our school libraries ARE the public libraries as well, so we serve both students and the general public. The capacity we have been able to afford using e-rate allows all of our schools to provide electronic curriculum, Advanced Placement curriculum, to provide professional development (we were able to host a CUE conference in our county because of the bandwidth available), and also to provide remote learning opportunities for our rural kids that would never be cost effective otherwise.

The E-Rate program is a program succeeding in its mission. As the FCC moves forward with this public notice, it is prudent to remain focused on the fact that E-Rate is a program that works. Any changes to the E-Rate program should be focused on expanding a successful program that has yet to reach its full potential and ensuring the FCC remains a good steward of the changes adopted 2014, allowing those changes to progress and play out as intended.

E-Rate played a critical role in the rapid and significant expansion of connectivity in schools, and the 2014 modernization was a much needed update to ensure more schools and libraries are connected to broadband. The E-Rate's investment in Category 2 Wi-Fi and internal connections funding is extremely valuable and could not be replaced by school, district or state funds.

I want to emphasize that Category 2 funding specifically allowed us to build WiFi infrastructure to serve every child and public library patron in our county. Without Category 2 funding, that would never have happened. I urge you NOT to change the existing structure of the Category 2 funding model, as our rural districts were able to provide high-bandwidth, quality curriculum and access to our kids and library patrons.

One of our two districts has used Category 2 funding, and plans to upgrade in the next funding cycle. The other plans to use the Category 2 funding by the 2020 window, so we urge not to make any changes to the Category 2 funding model. The existing Category 2 funding is very effective and providing

Internet access to our schools, so changing this will throw our planning into chaos. Please, please do not change this!

In closing, I reiterate my district's continued, strong support for and reliance upon the E-Rate program for being able to access and afford the high-speed connectivity that is so central to our students' learning. Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

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