

SEAN P. DUFFY  
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COMMITTEE ON  
FINANCIAL SERVICES  
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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
August 3, 2016

Received & Inspected  
AUG 09 2016  
FCC Mail Room

The Honorable Tom Wheeler  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

As you know, cell phones have become a nearly integral part of modern society. They are used to operate and grow small businesses, to keep in touch with friends and family while on the go, and to provide safety to the user; in addition to many other important uses. Unfortunately, cell service deployment in rural America has lagged behind urban areas. As a result, rural America becomes less competitive and less secure. To address this issue for rural Americans nationwide, I urge you to move forward with Phase II of the Mobility Fund.

In Northern Wisconsin, where I live, cell phones are more than a just a way to communicate, they enhance the safety of small communities where the nearest emergency assistance may be tens of miles away. Phase I of the Mobility Fund successfully brought voice and mobile broadband service to previously unserved areas. However, more support is needed for underserved communities like those in Northern Wisconsin. Implementation of Phase II is critical to make those areas as competitive and secure as the rest of country.

This area, which lacks adequate cell service, generates a significant amount of economic activity for my state. However, if cell service infrastructure is not improved, it will make it much harder for this area to remain competitive, especially when other areas of the country are deploying 5G trials in 2017. Given the importance of cell service to the economy and safety of rural communities, the Mobility Fund must be used to create and maintain new broadband infrastructure in underserved areas.

I appreciate your efforts to ensure that the latest technologies are available to all Americans, regardless of their zip code. However, there is more work to be done. I respectfully request that the goal of expanding cell service in rural America remains a top priority for the Commission until this problem is solved.

Sincerely,

Sean P. Duffy  
Member of Congress

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

October 14, 2016

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1208 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Duffy:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of mobile voice and broadband networks to the economic competitiveness and safety of rural America, as well as your views regarding the opportunity that a Mobility Fund Phase II may provide to improve rural mobile coverage.

Americans rely more and more on mobile broadband service. As providers roll-out more robust wireless networks, they are providing greater broadband speeds, efficiency, capacity, and a wealth of innovative features. The Commission is committed to ensuring that Americans living, working, and travelling in rural areas have access to these mobile broadband networks that are increasingly essential for full participation in today's society and economy.

The Commission will move forward with rules for Mobility Fund Phase II by the end of this year. Our recently-completed analysis of Form 477 data shows that there are significant gaps in 4G LTE coverage throughout the country that need to be addressed through Mobility Fund Phase II. The primary focus of Mobility Fund Phase II will be targeting our necessarily limited universal service funds to promote 4G LTE service in areas where it might not otherwise be expanded or sustained without federal support. With that goal in mind, the Commission is working to address the key structural and operational issues for a Phase II fund, including the appropriate budget, eligible geographic areas, proper distribution methodology, and the public interest obligations of support recipients.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Wheeler".

Tom Wheeler