

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20510

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December 19, 2017

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

Chairman Pai:

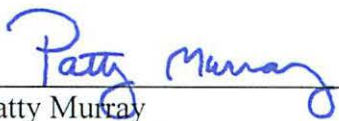
We write today to urge the Commission to authorize additional Alternative Connect America Model (A-CAM) funding in Washington state before the end of 2017.

Increasing A-CAM funding to up to \$200/month per eligible customer location would allow for current A-CAM plan participants to meet their defined additional broadband deployment commitments. Notably, these additional commitments expire on December 31, 2017 absent increased A-CAM support. Subsequently, by raising the maximum A-CAM contribution prior to the end of 2017, the Commission could immediately expand the availability of broadband services for thousands of rural and underserved Washington state residents and communities.


We strongly support the Commission's goal of universal service and affordable connectivity, and urge you to take expeditious action on this matter. To those same ends, we also ask that you explore how the Commission may increase universal service funding for rural carriers not participating in the A-CAM plan.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical issue.

Sincerely,

  
Patty Murray  
United States Senator

  
Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator

  
Jaime Herrera Beutler  
Member of Congress



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

February 13, 2018

The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1107 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Beutler:

Thank you for your letter on the importance of connecting additional rural consumers in Washington to high-speed broadband. Your views are very important and will be entered into the record of our proceeding on the Connect America Fund and considered as part of the Commission's review.

In my first remarks to FCC staff as Chairman, I declared that my highest priority would be making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas. A key way to reach this goal is by updating the high-cost universal service program to encourage cooperatives and other small, rural carriers to build more online infrastructure.

We need more deployment in sparsely populated rural areas if we're going to extend digital opportunity to all Americans. But I've heard from community leaders, Congress, and carriers that insufficient, unpredictable funding has kept them from reaching this goal. That is why I recently shared with my fellow commissioners an order that would promote more high-speed broadband deployment in rural areas. If adopted, it would provide over \$500 million in additional funding for cooperatives and small rural carriers—including those participating in the Alternative Connect America Model (A-CAM) plan. And it seeks public input on both further increasing support to current A-CAM recipients and on giving legacy rate-of-return carriers a new chance to elect model-based support. Increased funding will boost broadband deployment in rural America, and the accompanying reforms will put our high-cost system on a more efficient path, helping to ensure that every American can benefit from the digital revolution.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ajit V. Pai".

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

February 13, 2018

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
United States Senate  
511 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cantwell:

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Ajit V. Pai





FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

February 13, 2018

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Patty Murray  
United States Senate  
154 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

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Ajit V. Pai