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

October 23, 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.

Calloway County Schools is a rural school district. We use our E-Rate dollars to help provide Wide Area Network (WAN) service to our outlying school locations, as well as a recent upgrade to our core network router, and have purchased additional network access points for classrooms. We have also used E-Rate dollars to help with phone service, but this has been diminishing due to the change in Category 1 services a few years ago.

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.

Our district plans to use its remaining Category 2 funds in 2019, in order to replace aging network equipment (both wired and wireless) in the schools. Our school district is facing serious financial concerns, and we will not be able to replace the network equipment at that time without Category 2 funding assistance.

Since we are not a 1:1 school district (students:devices), we expect that with Category 2 funding will allow the school district to provide the Internet access needed in the classrooms, to better integrate with technology, and improve the students’ education.

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,



Caleb Reinhardt