

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
ARMED SERVICES
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

July 18, 2019

481

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

Dear Chairman Pai,

In 2015 when the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) broadband coverage maps indicated that 99.9% of Americans had wireless coverage, I invited your predecessor, Tom Wheeler, to West Virginia to see for himself just how bad coverage was on the ground. Sadly, four years later and after writing countless letters to you on this subject, questioning you about it in hearings, and even challenging one of your agency's federal coverage maps, the FCC's maps are still woefully inaccurate, and they are hurting the economy and the people of West Virginia.

As you know, last November, I became the only member of Congress ever to submit a formal and successful challenge to a federal broadband coverage map when I participated in the Mobility Fund Phase II (MF-II) Challenge Process. The aptly named Challenge Process for MF-II did have its flaws, but rather than considering it the end of an imperfect experiment, we should look to it as the beginning of a new, collaborative mapping process that encourages people to participate. That is why I introduced the Map Improvement Act (S. 1485) with Senator Gardner, which, if passed, would require the establishment of a user-friendly public feedback mechanism to validate carrier reported data. The people of West Virginia can certainly tell you where they do and do not have coverage. We just need to give them a voice in the process.

While I am encouraged by reports that you are considering establishing a formal public feedback mechanism to improve broadband coverage maps, the people of West Virginia need help now. Until a more viable process is established, I will be providing you with real coverage data from people on the ground in West Virginia and a brief description of the challenges they face personally, professionally, and economically as a result of their unreliable broadband service.

In June, my staff visited Harman's Luxury Cabins in Cabins, West Virginia, located within the Monongahela National Forest and near some of the most iconic sites in West Virginia like Seneca Rocks, Spruce Knob and Dolly Sods. These cabins are an ideal place for anglers, hikers, bikers, hunters, and rafters who want to explore all that area has to offer. Unfortunately, I have been alerted that Harman's has received several cancelations due to their unreliable internet service.

West Virginia is an outdoorsman's dream and the perfect location for an office retreat or a weekend getaway. However, while people may choose to visit my state to unplug, that does not necessarily mean they want to be completely disconnected. The lack of broadband access is

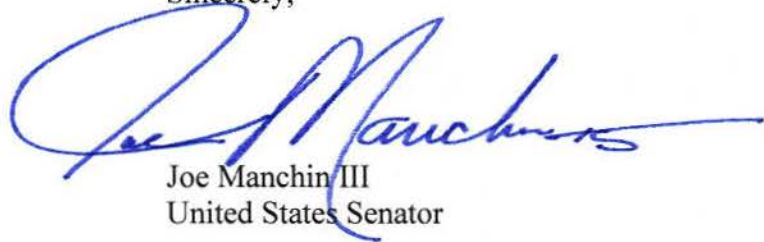
having devastating impacts on the tourism industry in my state, one of our largest economic drivers. Ironically, the same things that attract people to visit my beautiful state - our tall mountains, lush forests, rolling hills and roaring rapids - make broadband deployment astronomically expensive.

Using the Ookla Speed Testing Application on a Samsung Galaxy phone to test their fixed broadband service from Frontier Communications, my office received the following speed results at Harman's:

1. .03mbps down / .1mbps up (Frontier)
2. .12mbps down / .04mbps up (Frontier)
3. .25mbps down / .04mbps up (Frontier)
4. .19mbps down / .24mbps up (Frontier)

These numbers are well below your agency's definition of broadband and the advertised speed they were given by their provider. I hope you will use this data to validate the information West Virginia's broadband providers have submitted to the FCC and ensure that they are eligible for any and all relevant broadband grants and other resources. Places like Harman's Luxury Cabins in Cabins, WV depend on the promise of universal service, and it is our job to make good on that promise.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
ARMED SERVICES
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

August 14, 2019

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

Dear Chairman Pai,

While I am encouraged to hear that your agency is planning to implement a formal public feedback mechanism to improve broadband coverage maps, the people of West Virginia need help now. Until a more viable process is established, I will be providing you with real coverage data from people on the ground in West Virginia and a brief description of the challenges they face personally, professionally, and economically as a result of their unreliable broadband service.

I received correspondence from a constituent in Bruceton Mills, West Virginia in the northeastern part of the state and home to Big Bear Lake campgrounds, where many people come to visit and enjoy the lake as well as the mountain scenery. West Virginia is an outdoorsman's dream and the perfect location for an office retreat or a weekend getaway. However, while people may choose to visit my state to unplug, that does not necessarily mean they want to be completely disconnected.

The lack of broadband access is having devastating impacts on the tourism industry in my state, one of our largest economic drivers. Ironically, the same things that attract people to visit my beautiful state - our tall mountains, lush forests, rolling hills and roaring rapids - make broadband deployment astronomically expensive.

Using the Ookla Speed Testing Application on a laptop to test their fixed broadband service from Frontier Communications, my office received the following speed results from Bruceton Mills:

- 6.17mbps down / .70mbps up

These numbers are well below your agency's definition of broadband and the advertised speed they were given by their provider. I hope you will use this data to validate the information West Virginia's broadband providers have submitted to the FCC and ensure that they are eligible for any and all relevant broadband grants and other resources. Places like Bruceton Mills depend on the promise of universal service, and it is our job to make good on that promise.

Sincerely,



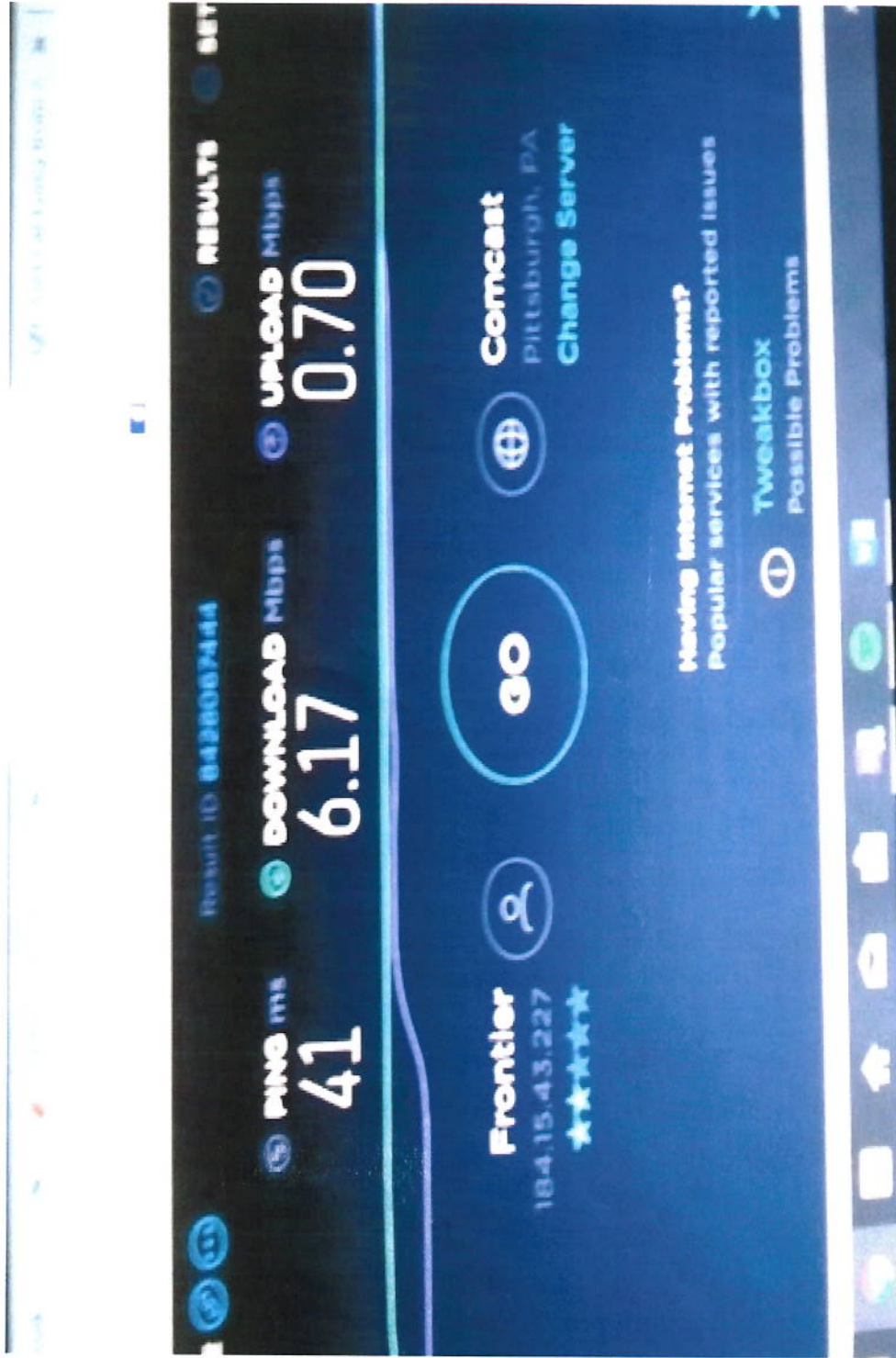
Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

(Enclosure)

Coordinates:

- Latitude: 39.703378
- Longitude: -79.621346

Address: 178 Ruffed Grouse Rd., Bruceton Mills, WV 26525



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I received correspondence from a constituent in Charleston, West Virginia, the capital of our beautiful state. This growing area is home to our state government, world-class healthcare institutions, and a vibrant array of local businesses, artists, and musicians. The people of Charleston rely on high-speed internet to govern, provide treatment, and conduct business. Additionally, the Charleston area is home to the largest school district in the state, meaning many students require high-speed internet in order to do homework or attend online classes. Any impediment to internet access could be detrimental to this bustling area.

West Virginia is a wonderful place to live with vibrant, caring communities that value connection. However, the lack of broadband access is having devastating impacts on residents' ability to work, learn, and connect in my state. Ironically, the same things that attract people to live and work in my beautiful state - our tall mountains, lush forests, rolling hills and roaring rapids - make broadband deployment astronomically expensive.

Using the Ookla Speed Testing Application on a Samsung Galaxy S9+ to test their fixed broadband service from Frontier Communications, my office received the following speed results from Charleston:

- 2.75mbps down / 0.68mbps up

These numbers are well below your agency's definition of broadband and the advertised speed they were given by their provider. I hope you will use this data to validate the information West Virginia's broadband providers have submitted to the FCC and ensure that they are eligible for any and all relevant broadband grants and other resources. Places like Charleston depend on the promise of universal service, and it is our job to make good on that promise.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

(Enclosure)

Address: 642 Limestone Road, Charleston, WV 25312



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I have received correspondence from a constituent in Great Cacapon, West Virginia which is just a short drive to Cacapon Resort State Park. The park, which is a popular spot for fishing, hiking and camping, is also undergoing an expansion right now, which will transform the area and provide an opportunity to bring more visitors to the park.

With places like Cacapon Resort State Park, it is no secret that West Virginia is an outdoorsman's dream and the perfect location for an office retreat or a weekend getaway. However, while people may choose to visit my state to unplug, that does not necessarily mean they want to be completely disconnected. The lack of broadband access is having devastating impacts on the tourism industry in my state, one of our largest economic drivers. Further, the lack of quality internet coverage in Great Cacapon is hurting students who are unable to complete their homework or use online textbooks because of a slow or non-existent connection.

Using the Ookla Speed Testing Application on an iPad to test their fixed broadband service from Frontier Communications, my office received the following speed results at Great Cacapon:

- 5.88mbps down / 0.62mbps up

These numbers are well below your agency's definition of broadband and the advertised speed they were given by their provider. I hope you will use this data to validate the information West Virginia's broadband providers have submitted to the FCC and ensure that they are eligible for any and all relevant broadband grants and other resources. Places like Great Cacapon depend on the promise of universal service, and it is our job to make good on that promise.

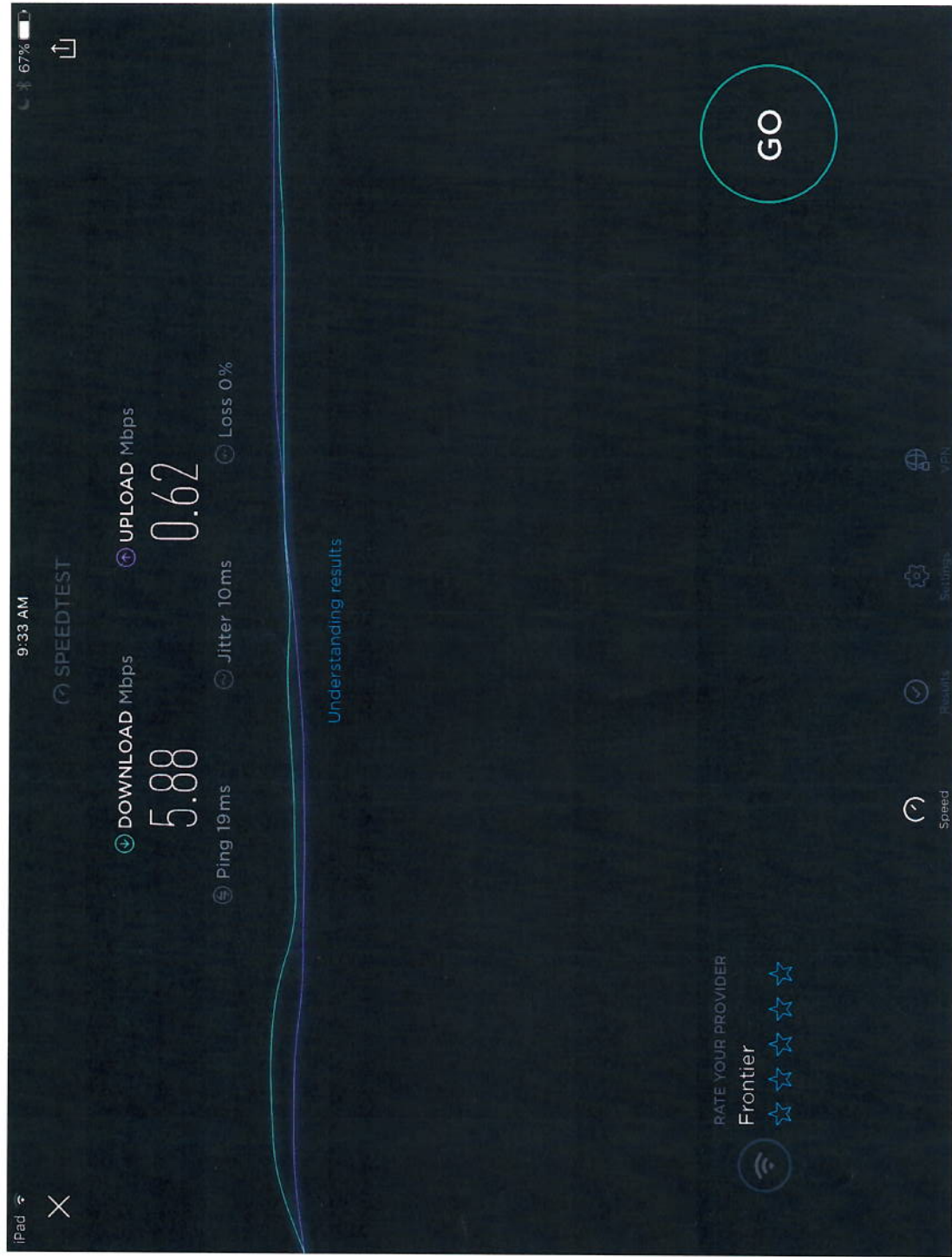
Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

(Enclosure)

Address: 300 Katelyn Ln, Great Cacapon, WV 25422



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WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

August 14, 2019

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Dear Chairman Pai,

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I received correspondence from Masontown, West Virginia in the northeastern part of the state and only a short drive away from iconic Cooper's Rock State Park. While this area is known for its natural beauty, many working people, including healthcare workers, also call Masontown home. Fixed broadband access is especially necessary for those in the healthcare field, who need to preserve patient safety and comply with HIPAA regulations. If fixed broadband is unavailable and unreliable, the safety and security of residents' private information may be vulnerable.

West Virginia is a wonderful place to live with vibrant, caring communities that value connection. However, the lack of broadband access is having devastating impacts on residents' ability to work, learn, and connect in my state. Ironically, the same things that attract people to live and work in my beautiful state - our tall mountains, lush forests, rolling hills and roaring rapids - make broadband deployment astronomically expensive.

Using the Ookla Speed Testing Application on an iPhone XS to test their fixed broadband service from Frontier Communications, my office received the following speed results from Masontown:

- 0.0mbps down/ 0.0mbps up
- 6.88mbps down / 0.0mbps up

These numbers are well below your agency's definition of broadband and the advertised speed they were given by their provider. I hope you will use this data to validate the information West Virginia's broadband providers have submitted to the FCC and ensure that they are eligible for any and all relevant broadband grants and other resources. Places like Masontown depend on the promise of universal service, and it is our job to make good on that promise.

Sincerely,



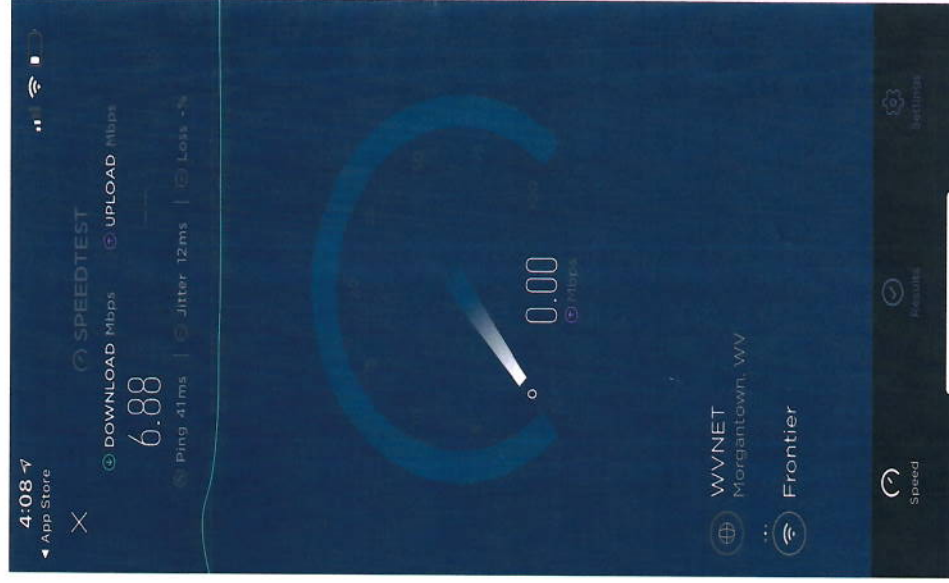
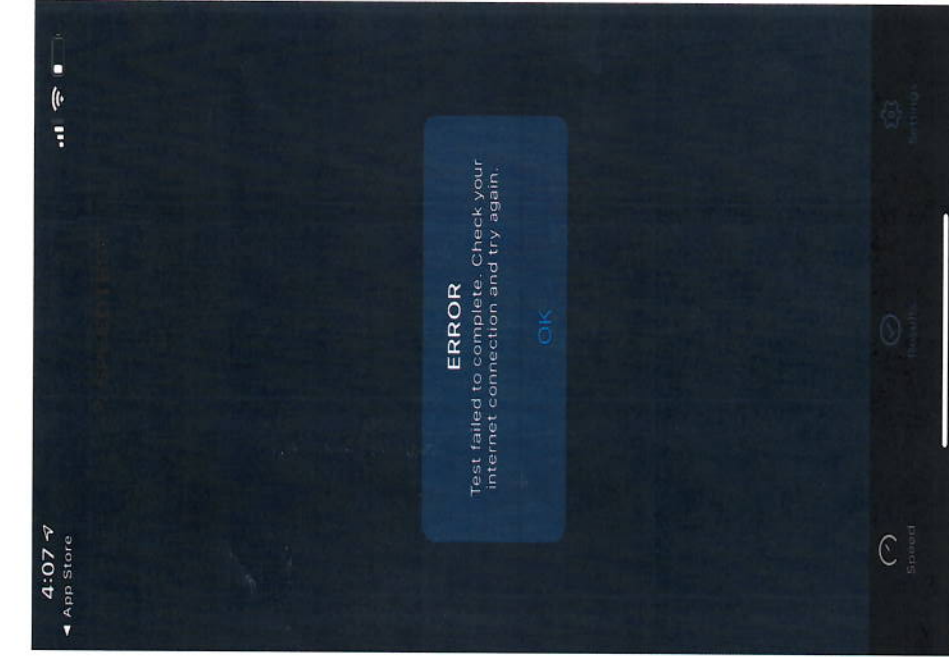
Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

(Enclosure)

Coordinates:

- Latitude: 39.5584
- Longitude: -79.7943

Address: 100 Polce Lane, Masontown, WV 26542



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My office received speed tests from the town of Petersburg, West Virginia, located within a short drive of Smoke Hole Caverns, Seneca Rocks, Spruce Knob, and the greater Dolly Sods wilderness area. These places are some of West Virginia's most popular attractions, especially for folks who like to fish, hike, bike, hunt, raft and experience all the incredible natural beauty that West Virginia has to offer.

For tourists traveling from areas such as Washington D.C., Petersburg is the last stop before entering the Monongahela National Forest. Reliable broadband connectivity is something both tourists and residents of the Petersburg area lack consistently, and this is having devastating impacts on the tourism industry in my state, one of our largest economic drivers. Ironically, the same things that attract people to visit my beautiful state - our tall mountains, lush forests, rolling hills and roaring rapids - make broadband deployment astronomically expensive.

Using the Frontier Internet Speed Test Tool Application on an iPad to test their mobile broadband service from Frontier Communications, my office received the following speed results from Petersburg:

- 2.2mbps down / 0.2mbps up

These numbers are well below your agency's definition of broadband and the advertised speed they were given by their provider. I hope you will use this data to validate the information West Virginia's broadband providers have submitted to the FCC and ensure that they are eligible for any and all relevant broadband grants and other resources. Places like Petersburg depend on the promise of universal service, and it is our job to make good on that promise.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

(Enclosure)

Address: 105 Conley Road, Petersburg, WV 26847



Frontier Internet Speed Test Tool

Test your high-speed internet connection bandwidth to locations around the US with this interactive broadband speed-test tool.



SPEEDTEST

PING

71

DOWNLOAD

2.2

AGAIN

JITTER

8

UPLOAD

0.2

Frontier
Ashburn, VA

COPY LINK



Frontier

Frontier

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

August 14, 2019

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The Honorable Ajit Pai
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Dear Chairman Pai,

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My office received speed tests from Renick, West Virginia where customers are being charged for much more than the technology will provide them with. Renick is located just on the edge of the George Washington and Jefferson national forests and adjacent to the National Radio Quiet Zone. The lack of efficient and reliable broadband access to the town of Renick is detrimental to the area's economy, driven primarily by the national forests and ski resorts nearby. Ironically, the same things that attract people to visit my beautiful state - our tall mountains, lush forests, rolling hills and roaring rapids - make broadband deployment astronomically expensive.

Using the Ookla Speed Testing Application on a Windows 10 computer to test their fixed broadband service from Frontier Communications, my office received the following speed results at Renick:

- 5.87mbps down / 0.59mbps up

These numbers are well below your agency's definition of broadband and the advertised speed they were given by their provider. I hope you will use this data to validate the information West Virginia's broadband providers have submitted to the FCC and ensure that they are eligible for any and all relevant broadband grants and other resources. Places like Renick depend on the promise of universal service, and it is our job to make good on that promise.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

(Enclosure)

Coordinates:

- Latitude: 37.9922
- Longitude: -80.3653

Address: 316 Axtell Ave. Renick, WV 24966

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Speedtest website. The page has a dark blue background with white and green text. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: "Apps", "Insights", "Network", "Enterprise", "About", and "Log in". Below this, a large green button with a white arrow pointing down says "START NOW". To the right of the button, there's a list of instructions: "1. Click the START button below", "2. Follow the instructions", and "3. Test Your Speed". Below the instructions, there's a progress bar and a "RESULTS" section. The results show a download speed of 78 Mbps and an upload speed of 5.87 Mbps. A "GO" button is visible. Below the results, there's a section for "Frontier" with a 5-star rating and a "GO" button. To the right, there's a "West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council" logo and a "Change Server" link. At the bottom, there's a large red banner with white text that says "LIMITED TIME OFFER YOU'RE BOOKED! PLAN YOUR CRUISE UP TO 30% OFF CRUISE FAVORITES". The banner also includes a "Book Now" button. The browser's address bar shows the URL "https://www.speedtest.net/". The Windows taskbar is visible at the bottom of the screen.

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Dear Chairman Pai,

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I received correspondence from a constituent that lives in a residential area in Sandyville, West Virginia, located near Sandy Creek, between Ravenswood and Ripley. Unfortunately, I have been alerted that residents of Sandyville have had difficulty accessing information for work and school due to their unreliable internet service.

West Virginia is a wonderful place to live with vibrant, caring communities that value connection. However, the lack of broadband access is having devastating impacts on residents' ability to work, learn, and connect in my state. Ironically, the same things that attract people to live and work in my beautiful state - our tall mountains, lush forests, rolling hills and roaring rapids - make broadband deployment astronomically expensive.

Using the 10.14.5 version of Mojave on a Macbook laptop, 2017 to test their fixed broadband service from Frontier Communications, my office received the following speed results from Sandyville:

- 3.0 mbps down / 0.7 mbps up
- 5.7 mbps down / 0.7 mbps up

These numbers are well below your agency's definition of broadband and the advertised speed they were given by their provider. I hope you will use this data to validate the information West Virginia's broadband providers have submitted to the FCC and ensure that they are eligible for any and all relevant broadband grants and other resources. Places like Sandyville depend on the promise of universal service, and it is our job to make good on that promise.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

(Enclosures)

Coordinates:

- Latitude: 38.932049
- Longitude: -81.640696



SPEEDTEST

PING

172

DOWNLOAD

3.0

JITTER

1

UPLOAD

0.7

AGAIN

Frontier
Chicago, IL

COPY LINK



Frontier
50.110.1.32

Frontier
Chicago, IL

All trademarks of Ookla, LLC, including Speedtest®, are used under license.

Coordinates:

- Latitude: 38.932049
- Longitude: -81.640696



🔗 SPEEDTEST

📶 PING

81

ms

📶 DOWNLOAD

5.7

Mbps

AGAIN

📶 JITTER

1

ms

📶 UPLOAD

0.7

Mbps



Frontier
Palo Alto, CA

COPY LINK



Frontier

184.15.71.196



Frontier

Palo Alto, CA



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August 14, 2019

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I received correspondence from two different constituents that live in a residential area in Wheeling, West Virginia, located along the Ohio River in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Wheeling is known for being the first capital city of WV, and holds a rich history. Unfortunately, I have been alerted that residents of Wheeling have had difficulty accessing information for work and school due to their unreliable internet service.

West Virginia is a wonderful place to live with vibrant, caring communities that value connection. However, the lack of broadband access is having devastating impacts on residents' ability to work, learn, and connect in my state. Ironically, the same things that attract people to live and work in my beautiful state - our tall mountains, lush forests, rolling hills and roaring rapids - make broadband deployment astronomically expensive.

Using the Ookla Speed Test Application on a PC Running Windows 10 and an Asus laptop to test their fixed broadband services from Frontier Communications, my office received the following speed results in Wheeling:

- 11.38 mbps down / 0.77 mbps up
- 3.75 mbps down / 0.46 mbps up

These numbers are well below your agency's definition of broadband and the advertised speed they were given by their provider. I hope you will use this data to validate the information West Virginia's broadband providers have submitted to the FCC and ensure that they are eligible for any and all relevant broadband grants and other resources. Places like Wheeling depend on the promise of universal service, and it is our job to make good on that promise.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

(Enclosures)

Coordinates:

- Latitude: 39°58'56.7"N
- Longitude: 80°39'42.8"W

Address: 662 Carrigan Dr., Wheeling, WV 26003




Address: 93 Pappys Lane, Wheeling WV, 26003

verage, and
ith Xfinity.

\$49⁹⁹




a mo. /
12 mos.

Plus, reliably
fast speeds






Get It Now

Equipment, taxes and other charges
and subj. to change. See disclaimer for details.




Result ID 8477073409


 RESULTS  SETTINGS

 PING ms

92

 DOWNLOAD Mbps

3.75

 UPLOAD Mbps

0.46

Frontier
184.15.184.116
★★★★★



GO



Suddenlink
Communication
LLC



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

October 15, 2019

The Honorable Joe Manchin
United States Senate
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Manchin:

Thank you for your letter regarding broadband mapping. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. I have seen for myself what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its families, its schools, its hospitals, its farms, its businesses—as well as the impact of its absence. And while I haven't had the chance to visit Harman's Luxury Cabins in Cabins, West Virginia, I have personally seen a similar reality at Capon Springs and Farms in Capon Springs, where the owner told me the lack of broadband had a material effect on his business.

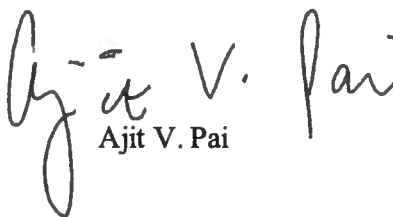
I agree that using updated and accurate broadband deployment data is critical to bridging the digital divide. We need to understand where broadband is available and where it is not to better target our efforts and direct funding to areas that are most in needed. That's why the Commission began a top-to-bottom review of the Form 477 process to ensure that broadband data was more accurate, granular, and ultimately useful to the Commission and the public.

After a thorough review of the record and the painstaking work of our career staff, the FCC adopted a Report and Order in August aimed at generating more granular and more accurate broadband maps through the creation of the "Digital Opportunity Data Collection." We want broadband providers to report where they actually offer service below the census-block level, and we want to include third-party input, such as feedback from the public, to ensure up-to-date and accurate broadband deployment maps.

These updated maps would be used to focus funding to expand broadband through future initiatives, such as the second phase of the proposed Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF). The RDOF will complement and build on the success of the CAF Phase II auction of fixed broadband support, which allocated \$1.488 billion to expand broadband to more than 713,000 unserved rural homes and small businesses over the next 10 years. Once implemented, the RDOF will provide over \$20 billion over the next decade to connect millions of rural homes and businesses to high-speed broadband, representing the FCC's single biggest step yet to close the digital divide.

I look forward to continuing to collaborate with you to close the digital divide.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai