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February 7, 2019

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

Dear Chairman Pai,

According to your most recent broadband deployment report, approximately 25 percent of rural Floridians lack access to a broadband connection. I am all too familiar with this problem in my district, where more than 90 percent of the geographic area is classified as rural. My constituents in Gainesville generally have broadband access; it is a different reality if you travel just a few miles outside of the city. Students are unable to complete their homework, small business owners can't keep up with their competitors' digital footprints, health care quality diminishes, and farmers can't take advantage of the latest precision agriculture tools.

I appreciate the Commission's efforts to bridge the rural broadband gap and encourage the Commission to take the additional step of better enabling TV white spaces (TVWS) technology. TVWS technology is already delivering broadband connectivity to thousands of rural Americans across the country. I am eager for this technology to be deployed more broadly, enabling broadband connectivity for my constituents, but regulatory uncertainty is limiting the needed investments in TVWS technology that would improve performance and reduce costs.

In Washington, we can work together to ensure our policies give local broadband providers every possible tool to expand access. Removing regulatory barriers related to TVWS broadband deployment is one of those opportunities and I encourage you to move quickly, to provide the regulatory certainty these providers need.

The Commission should eliminate these regulatory barriers by finalizing proceedings related to TVWS that have remained in draft form for more than two years. Specifically, it is crucial that appropriate technical rules are in place so that sufficient spectrum below 700 MHz is available for unlicensed broadband use. Additionally, rules need to be adopted to address the opportunity for TVWS use in rural areas, which could enable connectivity on school buses and IoT scenarios like precision agriculture.

I believe that taking action to remove the regulatory barriers holding TVWS back is consistent with the Commission's goals. Please let me know if you have any questions and I look forward to your timely response to these concerns.

Sincerely,



Ted S. Yoho, DVM  
Member of Congress



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 28, 2019

The Honorable Ted Yoho  
U.S. House of Representatives  
511 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

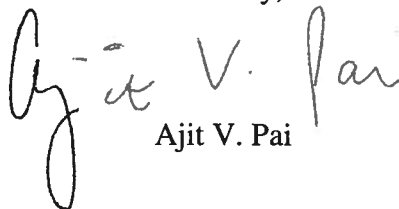
Dear Congressman Yoho:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of affordable and reliable broadband in communities with limited access. Having grown up in rural Kansas, I know what the digital divide is like. That's why closing that divide is my top priority—and one that the Commission is working on all fronts to support. And that's why the Commission has streamlined rules to deploy the next-generation of wireless connectivity, known as 5G; encouraged carriers to replace aging copper with super-fast fiber on an expedited basis; launched two auctions of millimeter-wave spectrum; increased federal support for our rural healthcare program and for small, rural carriers serving high-cost areas; and held our nation's first reverse auction for fixed broadband support. The results of these actions will be felt throughout America, and especially in rural America, where as you know the case to build out broadband is often hard for any business to make.

I also agree with you that unlicensed spectrum in the TV white spaces—those channels on which no broadcaster is broadcasting—offers an opportunity for new wireless broadband deployments. That's why I am pleased that the Commission just last week started to fill in the many details left unfinished by the prior Administration, including resolution of how to ensure database accuracy. This is no simple task—after all, TV white space devices must fully protect all incumbent services. But it is one the Commission's excellent staff is well-positioned to carry out.

Thank you for your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai