

DOUG COLLINS

9TH DISTRICT, GEORGIA

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

RANKING MEMBER

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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

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April 12, 2019

The Honorable Ajit Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> St. S.W.  
Washington D.C. 20536

Dear Chairman Pai,

I write in strong support of the satellite market modification petitions submitted by Franklin, Hart, Stephens, and Elbert counties (the "counties"), seeking coverage of in-state broadcasting from Atlanta-based stations. I am encouraged that the Commission has initially approved the petitions submitted by Franklin, Hart, and Stephens Counties, and have received a petition from Elbert County. This is the culmination of years of work by the counties in support of their residents' need for access to in-state television programming for news, weather, and sports.

Residents of these four Northeast Georgia counties who subscribe to satellite television currently receive local programming from broadcasting stations in the Asheville, North Carolina and Greenville, South Carolina media markets. As a result, residents are deprived of the range of critical information that in-state broadcasters provide to their communities. Since weather patterns in this region generally move from west to east, residents depend on public safety messages that come through in-state broadcasters. Thus, the provision of local broadcasting options represents a matter of public safety as well as an important cultural and economic link between these counties and the rest of Georgia.

This progress by the counties comes after years of effort in the legislative and executive branches of our government as well as at the state level. Members of Georgia's congressional delegation worked together with colleagues and stakeholders to develop a viable solution that was ultimately included in the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Reauthorization (STELAR) Act of 2014. The Commission's promulgation of final rulemaking in September of 2015 and the issuance of the first market modification orders in early 2017, pursuant to the STELAR Act, has given hope that the residents of counties in Northeast Georgia will finally have access to the local broadcasting that they so urgently want and need.

At this time, media stations in South Carolina have appealed the decision by the Commission's Media Bureau to approve the Franklin and Hart County petitions. I urge the Commission to prioritize review of the counties' petitions and work with all affected stakeholders to quickly complete consideration of their satellite market modification applications. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Doug Collins  
Ninth Congressional District of Georgia



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

April 26, 2019

The Honorable Doug Collins  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1504 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Collins:

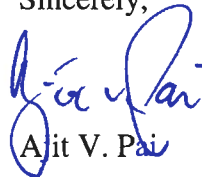
Thank you for your letter regarding the market modification proceedings involving Franklin, Hart, Stephens, and Elbert Counties in your district. I understand how important in-state local news and information is to American consumers, including those who live in "orphan" counties where such in-state programming may be limited.

As you noted, the Media Bureau has already granted three out of the four petitions that were filed. The Commission is currently examining Applications for Review (essentially appealing the Bureau's decision to the full Commission) with respect to the approval of the petitions involving Franklin and Hart Counties.

The Bureau granted the petition involving Stephens County on April 4, 2019, and we are currently within the 30-day period during which entities may challenge this decision. Finally, on April 5, the Bureau issued a Public Notice with respect to the Elbert County petition, establishing a 30-day period for public comment. The Media Bureau has until August 5 to act on this particular petition.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance. Your letter will be made part of the record of each of the proceedings.

Sincerely,

  
Ajit V. Pai

P.S. Congressman, always a pleasure to hear from you. Thanks for your support and your hospitality during my visit to Dablonega! I hope to catch up again, either in Washington or the Ninth District.