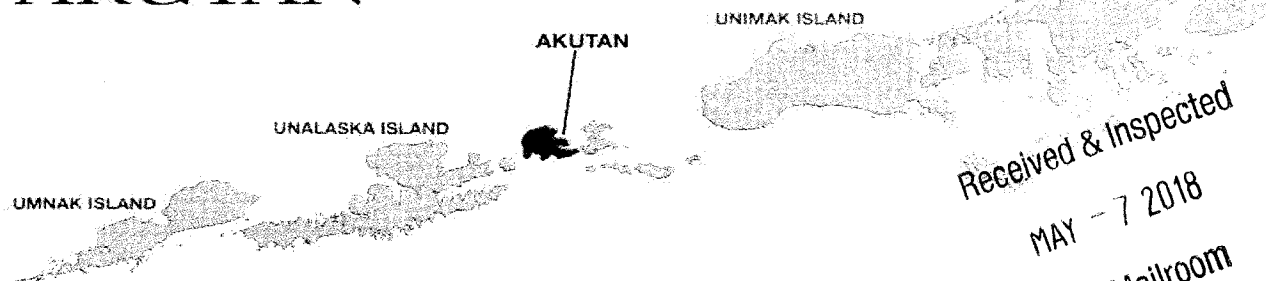


AKUTAN



April 27, 2018

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Room TW-A325
Washington, D.C. 20554

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

RE: Promoting Telehealth and Telemedicine in Rural America, WC Docket No. 17-310

Dear Ms. Dortch,

The City of Akutan is in support of the Emergency Waiver Petition filed by the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition on April 3, 2018. This Petition asks the FCC to waive Section 54.675(a) of its Rules and fully fund qualified applications for Rural Health Care (RHC) funding starting with Funding Year 2017, until the Commission completes the open rulemaking in WC Docket No. 17-310.

The RHC program funding cuts of 15 to 25 percent were much larger than anticipated and are effectively retroactive because they were not announced by USAC until more than eight months after the start of the funding year, much later than was reasonably expected. As a result, health care providers across the nation that entered into contracts for eligible services effective at the start of FY 2017 (July 1, 2017) face immediate and significant financial hardship.

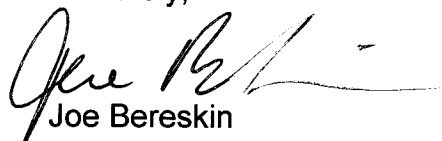
The City of Akutan as with other communities in the Aleutian East Borough is very concerned about the health, well-being and quality of life of its residents. The decrease in funding will adversely impact the quality and type of services available to the community. As such, this will be detrimental to the health and welfare of our residents.

I ask that you carefully consider our support of SHLB's emergency petition. While we hope long-term solutions to improve the Rural Health Care Program come from the open

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rulemaking docket, we must also urge the Commission to act to alleviate the more immediate problems being caused by the recent funding delays and shortages.

Sincerely,



Joe Bereskin
Mayor

CC:

The Honorable Senator Murkowski
The Honorable Senator Sullivan
The Honorable Congressman Young