

May 14, 2018

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

Dear Chairman Pai,

We write in reference to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) adopted Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order (NPRM and Order) seeking comment on how to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program. This program has grown in importance since its inception and we urge the FCC to sufficiently increase the current funding cap to account for the current demand and future growth of the program's recipients.

The RHC program has been improving the quality of health care available to patients in rural areas since 1997. The FCC initially established the Telecommunications Program to ensure that rural hospitals and health care providers did not pay more for telecommunications services than their urban counterparts. Since then, the program has grown to include the Healthcare Connect Fund, which provides financial support to consortia that build out broadband networks to connect rural and urban health care providers. In 2016, Congress added skilled nursing facilities to the list of eligible entities and according to the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition, the estimated total number of eligible institutions has more than doubled since the program was created. Yet the program's \$400 million annual cap has remained the same for over 20 years.

In 2016, for the first time ever, the demand for RHC funding exceeded the cap and funding to recipients was reduced by 7.5 percent. Further, it was recently announced that RHC applicants will suffer a devastating cutback in funding of 16 to 26 percent in funding year 2017 because of continued growth in demand. Unless the spending cap is raised appropriately to account for current needs and future growth, health care providers in rural areas will encounter severe rate increases for their broadband services, making it even harder for rural health care practitioners to engage in life-saving telemedicine. A recent survey done by the Journal of Rural Health shows that 59 percent of non-metro health clinics have less than a 10 megabit per second connection, which is one percent of the gigabit capacity recommended by the National Broadband Plan. This shortage of broadband connectivity highlights the amount of work still to be done to support and connect rural health care providers to 21st century technologies.

We applaud the FCC for taking the preliminary steps to seek comment on how to strengthen the RHC program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As you move toward a final decision in this proceeding, we urge you to sufficiently increase the current funding cap to account for the current demand and future growth of the program's recipients. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senator



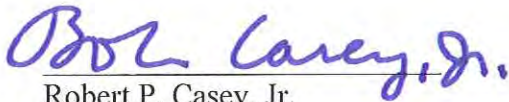
John Hoeven
United States Senator




Mazie Hirono
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator



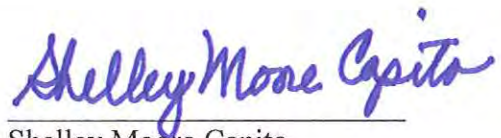
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



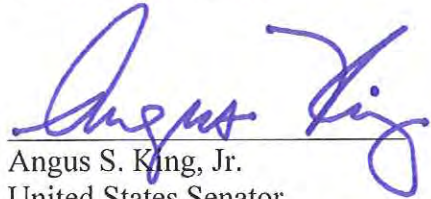
Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



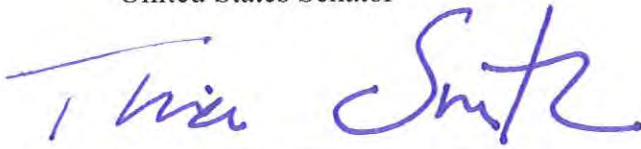
Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



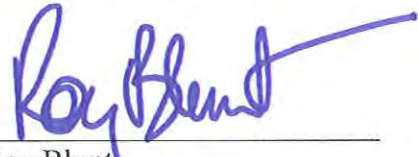
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Susan Collins
United States Senator



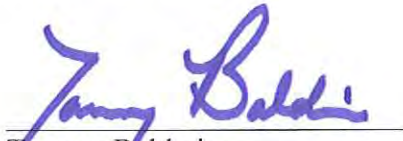
Tina Smith
United States Senator



Roy Blunt
United States Senator




Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



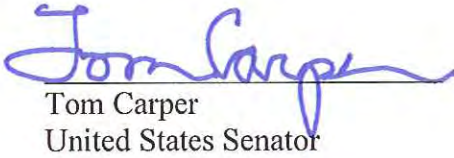
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



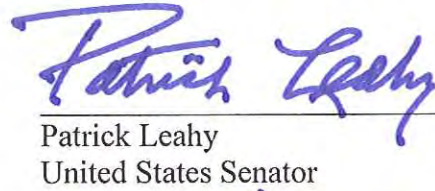
Claire McCaskill
United States Senator



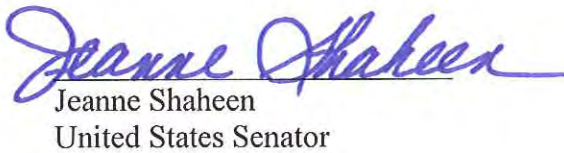
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



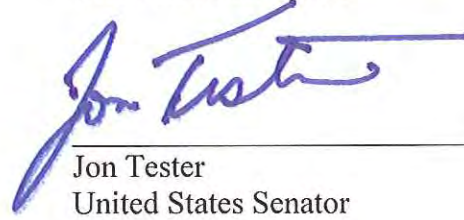
Tom Carper
United States Senator



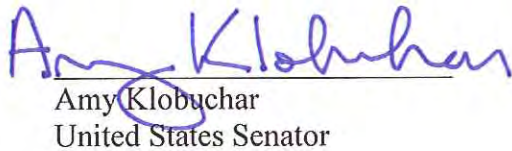
Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator



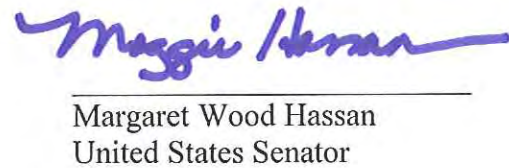
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



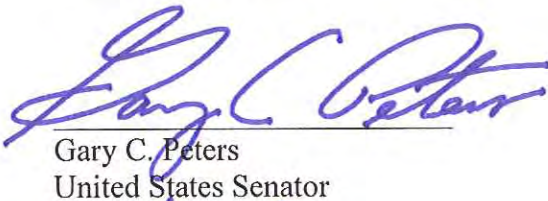
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



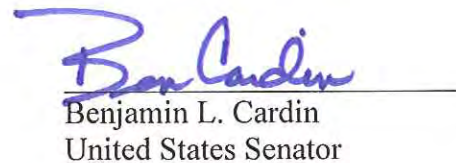
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



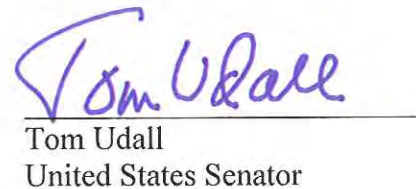
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



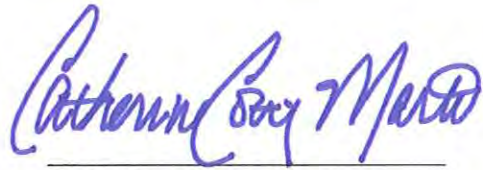
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



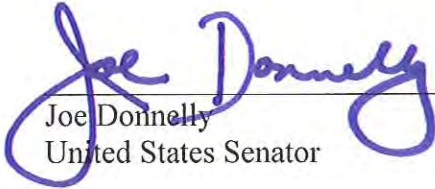
Tom Udall
United States Senator



Doug Jones
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Joe Donnelly
United States Senator

Cc:
Commissioner Mike O'Rielly
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel
Commissioner Brendan Carr



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senate
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Heitkamp:

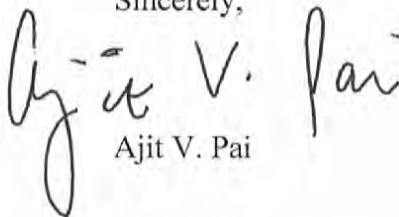
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is stylized, with the first name "Ajit" written in a large, flowing script, and "V. Pai" written in a more compact, cursive style.

Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senate
330 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hirono:

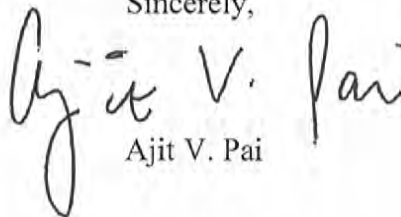
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part.

Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Bob Casey
United States Senate
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Casey:

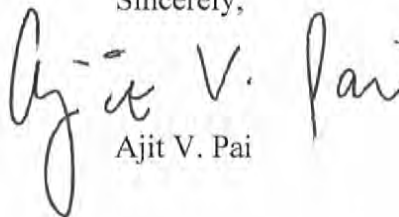
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
United States Senate
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Brown:

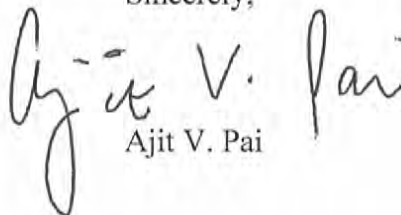
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Angus King
United States Senate
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator King:

Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Tina Smith
United States Senate
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Smith:

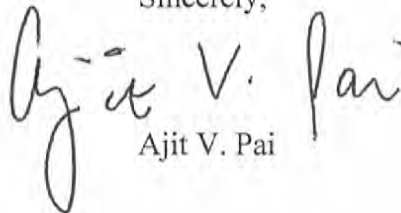
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Michael Bennet
United States Senate
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Bennet:

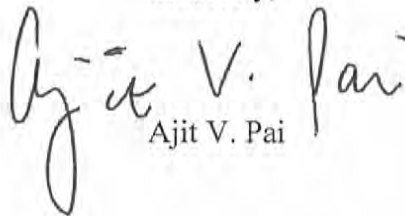
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable John Hoeven
United States Senate
338 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hoeven:

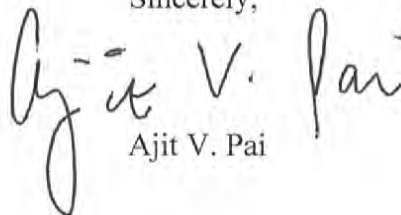
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Dan Sullivan
United States Senate
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Sullivan:

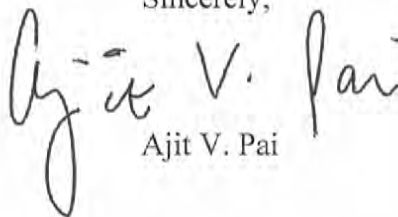
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Murkowski:

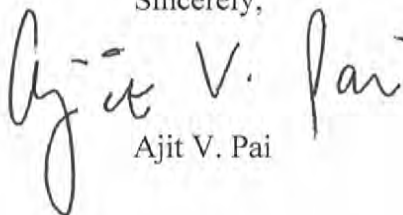
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senate
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Capito:

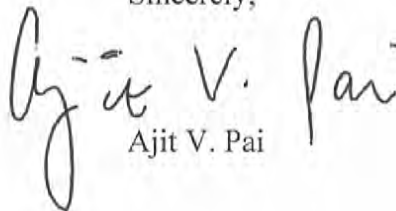
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Collins:

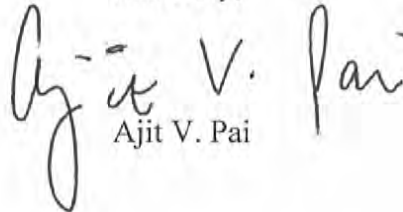
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Roy Blunt
United States Senate
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Blunt:

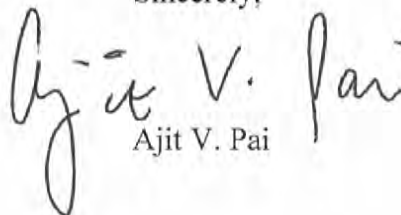
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Baldwin:

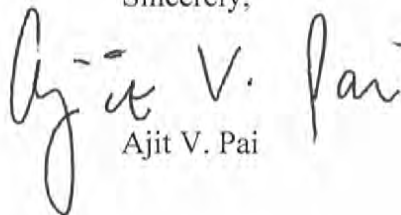
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Claire McCaskill
United States Senate
730 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator McCaskill:

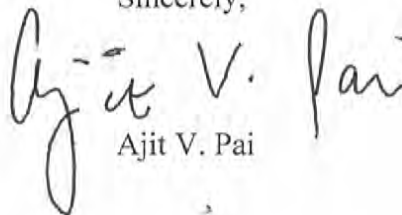
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
United States Senate
513 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Carper:

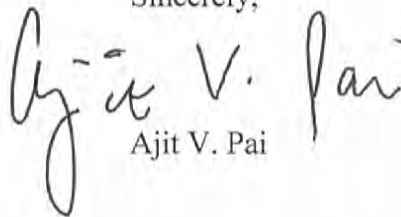
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senate
506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen:

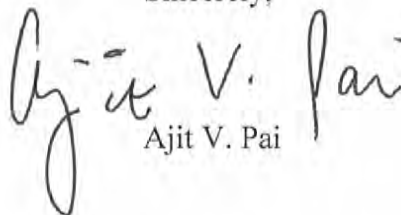
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar:

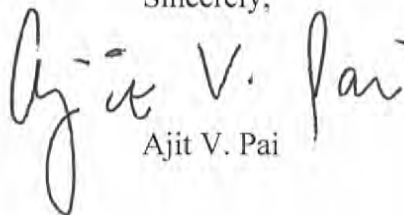
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
United States Senate
731 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Stabenow:

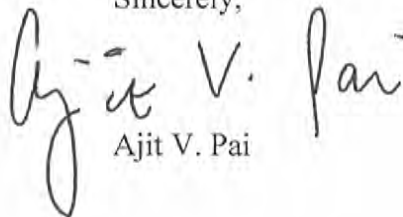
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Gary Peters
United States Senate
724 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Peters:

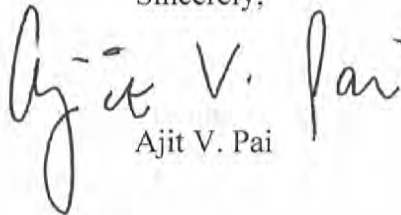
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
United States Senate
303 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Heinrich:

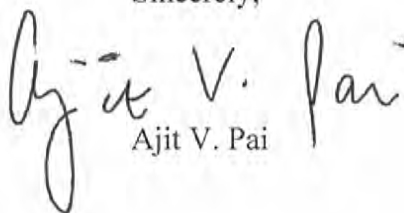
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part.

Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
United States Senate
B40C Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Van Hollen:

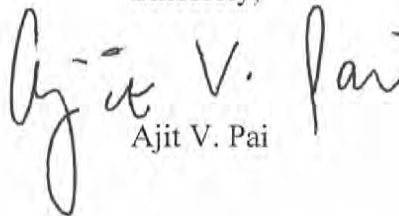
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is stylized, with the first letters of the first and last names being large and prominent.

Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
United States Senate
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Leahy:

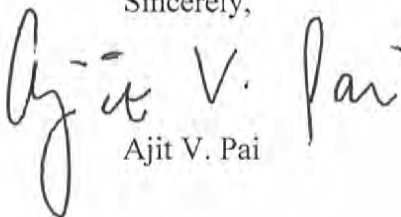
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Jon Tester
United States Senate
311 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Tester:

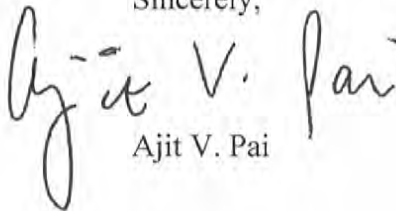
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senate
478 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Gillibrand:

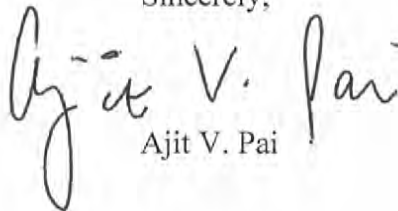
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is stylized, with the first name "Ajit" written in a large, flowing script and the last name "Pai" in a similar style. The middle name "V." is written in a smaller, more formal script between the first and last names.
Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Maggie Hassan
United States Senate
B85 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hassan:

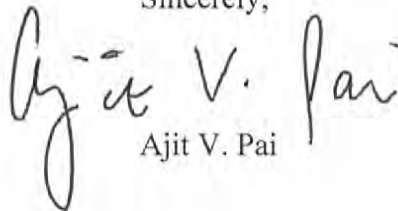
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senate
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cardin:

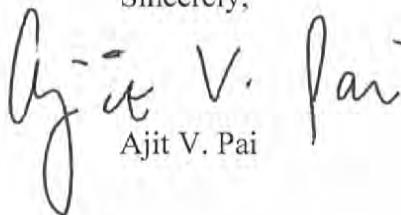
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senate
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Udall:

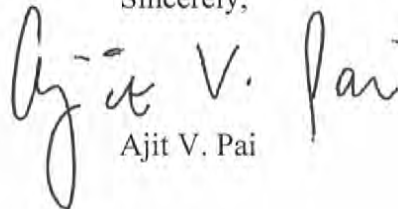
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Doug Jones
United States Senate
326 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Jones:

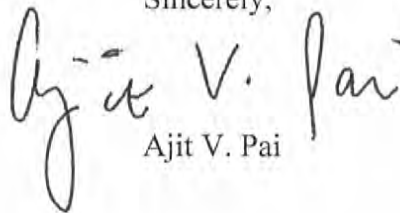
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ajit V. Pai".
Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Joe Donnelly
United States Senate
720 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Donnelly:

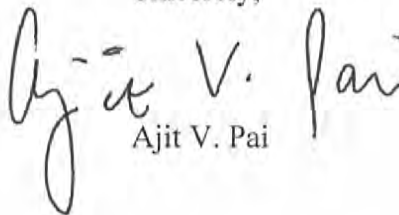
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senate
B40A Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cortez Masto:

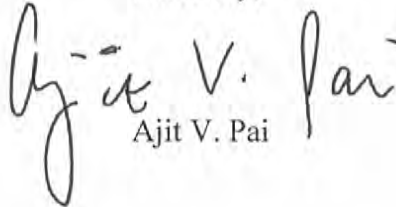
Thank you for your letter expressing support for the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to strengthen the Rural Health Care (RHC) Program and improve access to telehealth in rural America. As the son of two doctors in rural Kansas, I understand the critical role that broadband plays in providing patients in rural areas with high-quality health care services. And as Chairman, I've seen the potential of telemedicine firsthand, from a Veterans Affairs facility in rural Lecanto, Florida to Augusta Health in relatively rural Staunton, Virginia.

That's why I have circulated a draft Report and Order to my colleagues that would take immediate action to increase funding for rural hospitals and health clinics by 43%, or \$171 million per year. This significant increase—alongside future inflation adjustments and a mechanism to carry forward unused funding from previous years—will ensure that rural health care providers get the connectivity they need to better serve patients for years to come. I hope that my colleagues will support this order soon.

In addition, we must always ensure that scarce federal funds are being well spent. That's why Commission staff are taking a hard look at eliminating any waste, fraud, and abuse within the RHC program. After all, every dollar misspent by an unscrupulous service provider is a dollar that can't offset the costs that doctors and nurses incur serving some of the most vulnerable patients in America. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue these efforts later this year.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai