

November 15, 2017

Mr. Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

We are alarmed to learn of your recently circulated proposals that would eviscerate the Lifeline program and leave many of the most vulnerable people in the country without access to affordable communications. As you are well aware, the Lifeline program provides a modest monthly subsidy of \$9.25 to connect low-income Americans to phone and internet services. As broadband prices continue to soar and affordability continues to suffer, adoption gaps remain. The Lifeline program has proven critical for poor families and people of color who are caught on the wrong side of the digital divide.

Among the most troubling proposals you suggested are overall budget caps on the program that could shrink the size of all recipients' benefits, as well as a lifetime cap on individual users that could completely cut off those still in need. These caps are both extremely harmful, as these changes could inflict arbitrary limits on participation or slash funding to eligible participants; and unnecessary because the program has been shrinking for the past 5 years and payments are their lowest since 2009. In your dissenting opinion in the 2016 Lifeline Reform Order, you conceded that the reforms implemented in the 2012 Lifeline Order were working and as a result, spending for the Lifeline program has been on a steady decline.¹ Given the effectiveness of driving down program costs without undue harm to recipients, which unfortunately were not reflected in a recent May 2017 GAO Report on the program, there is no need to implement an arbitrary cap.

Another troublesome proposal would ban "non-facilities-based providers" from participating in the program. This would eliminate participation by 4 of the top 5 Lifeline providers, accounting for more than half of the program's current expenditures, and possibly zero out participation by carriers serving as much as three quarters of the current Lifeline subscriber base. In some parts of the country these are the only providers that offer Lifeline service. Shutting them out would leave Lifeline-eligible families in these regions with no viable way to get online.

The proposals would also end support for carriers that might offer only a standalone broadband product, requiring them to offer traditional voice service too. While we are in favor of continuing

¹ https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-16-38A5.pdf

to support voice offerings, it is backward-looking and illogical to force carriers to provide it in order to qualify for broadband support.

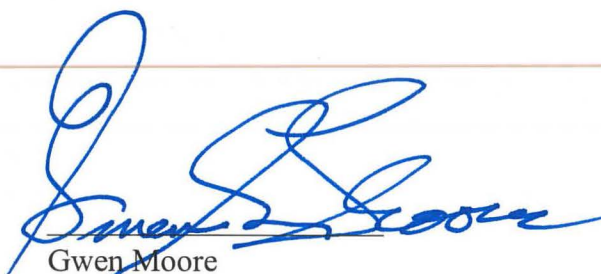
Lifeline was created 30 years ago by President Reagan, and updated in major fashion twice (under Presidents George W. Bush and Obama) to help ensure the most vulnerable people in America had access to lifesaving communications services. Recent updates—including the National Lifeline Accountability Database and the National Eligibility Verifier Program, which should be fully implemented by 2019—have successfully helped to both limit fraud and decrease spending.

If your newly proposed changes were implemented, they would jeopardize access for countless individuals who use the internet to look for employment and educational opportunities, to access social services, or to find crucial health information. You promised from your first day on the job earlier this year that you would aim to close the digital divide. Yet, taken together, these disastrous changes would constitute a huge step backwards in closing the digital divide. Thank you and we look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



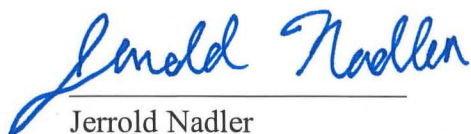
Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Hakeem S. Jeffries
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



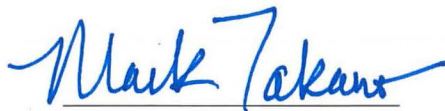
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



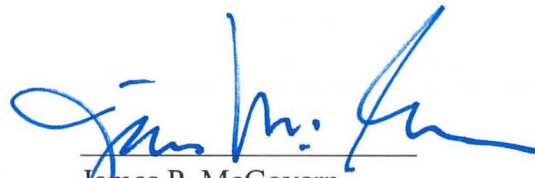
Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



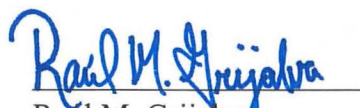
José E. Serrano
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



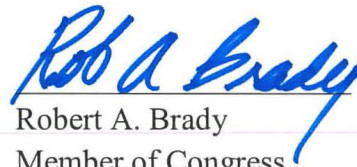
Luis V. Gutiérrez
Member of Congress



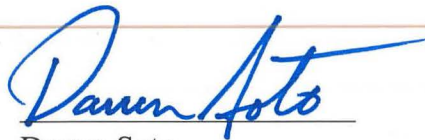
John A. Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress



Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Ted Lieu
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



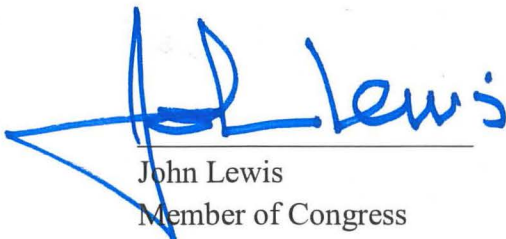
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



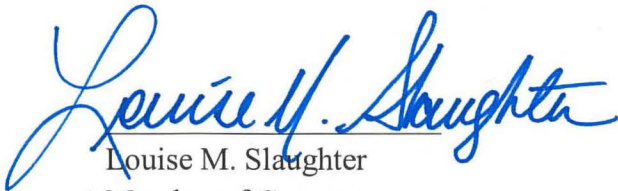
Cedric L. Richmond
Member of Congress



John Lewis
Member of Congress



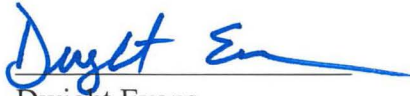
John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress




Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress



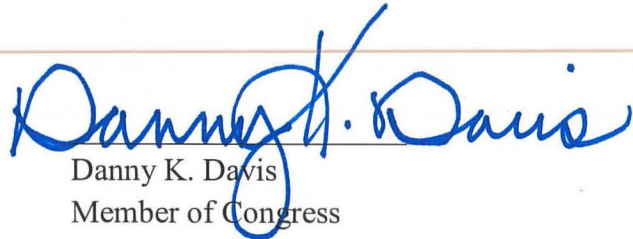
Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



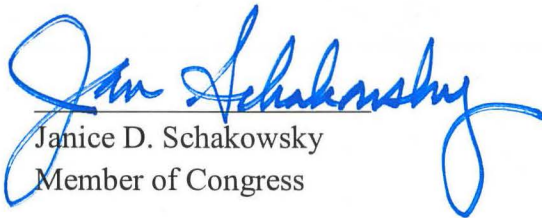
Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal

Alan S. Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Carol Shea-Porter

Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Colleen Hanabusa

Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress

Elijah E. Cummings

Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

Hank Johnson Jr.

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson Jr.
Member of Congress

Bill Foster

Bill Foster
Member of Congress



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Gregory W. Meeks
U.S. House of Representatives
2234 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Gregory W. Meeks:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

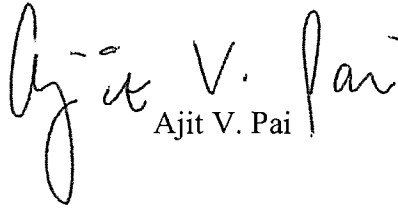
At the same time, I am deeply committed to ensuring that the Commission fulfills its obligation to be a responsible steward of the Universal Service Fund. It is critical to strengthen the Lifeline program’s efficacy and integrity by reducing the waste, fraud, and abuse that has run rampant in this program for the better part of a decade. For example, GAO discovered 1,234,929 Lifeline subscribers who apparently were not eligible to participate in the program as well as 6,378 individuals who apparently enrolled or recertified after being reported as deceased. That limited sample alone constituted more than \$137 million in abuse each year. That’s money that could be better spent building out broadband in low-income neighborhoods and making broadband more affordable for low-income families and veterans living in rural America and on Tribal lands.

I agree with you that the National Lifeline Accountability Database and National Verifier are important tools for eliminating this waste, fraud, and abuse. But they are not the only ones, nor will they solve all the problems with the program. It simply isn’t prudent to sit idly by when hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are at stake. To address this, in a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* accompanying the *Order* the Commission sought comment on a wide variety of measures to improve the administration of the Lifeline program—from re-empowering state commissions to police Lifeline carriers to partnering with states to stand up the National Verifier, from improving program audits to adopting a self-enforcing budget. We are currently reviewing the record that has been compiled in response to the *Notice* to determine the best path forward,

and your letter has been added to that record. The Lifeline program's goal is—or should be—to empower consumers, not companies. And that will be our lodestar as we move forward to ensure that unscrupulous companies stop abusing this important program.

I appreciate your 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

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Michael E. Capuano
U.S. House of Representatives
1414 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Michael E. Capuano:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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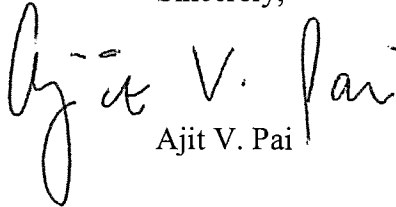
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Ajit V. Pai



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
U.S. House of Representatives
2109 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Jerrold Nadler:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

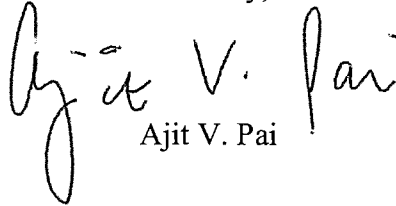
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Ajit V. Pai



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable G.K. Butterfield
U.S. House of Representatives
2080 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear G.K. Butterfield:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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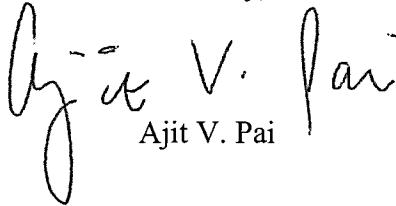
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Ajit V. Pai



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WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Gwen Moore
U.S. House of Representatives
2252 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Gwen Moore:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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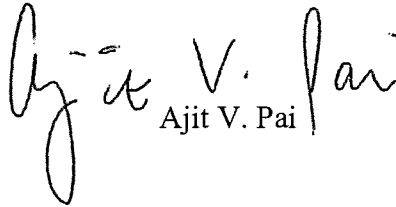
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Rohit Khanna
U.S. House of Representatives
513 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Rohit Khanna:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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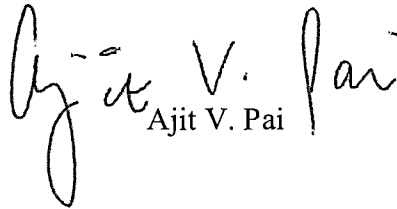
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Ajit V. Pai



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Keith Ellison
U.S. House of Representatives
2263 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

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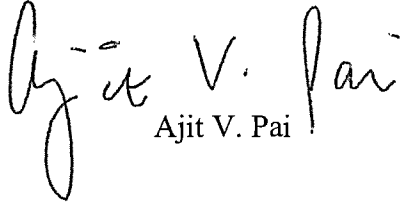
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I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Yvette D. Clarke
U.S. House of Representatives
2058 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Yvette D. Clarke:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

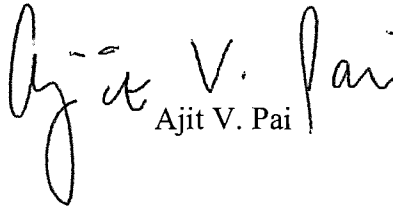
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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
U.S. House of Representatives
1607 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Hakeem Jeffries:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

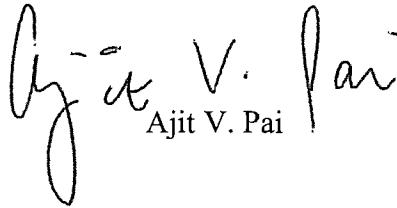
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Tim Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1126 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Tim Ryan:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

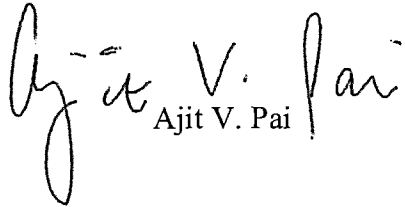
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Alcee L. Hastings
U.S. House of Representatives
2353 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Alcee L. Hastings:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

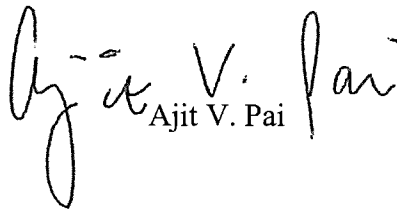
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Anthony G. Brown
U.S. House of Representatives
1505 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Anthony G. Brown:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

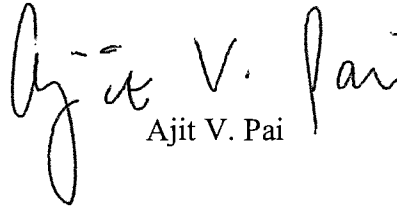
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Mark Takano
U.S. House of Representatives
1507 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mark Takano:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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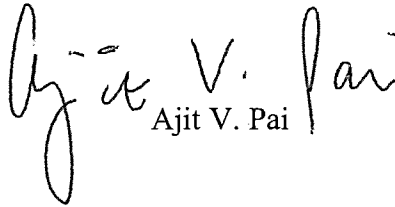
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jose E. Serrano
U.S. House of Representatives
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Jose E. Serrano:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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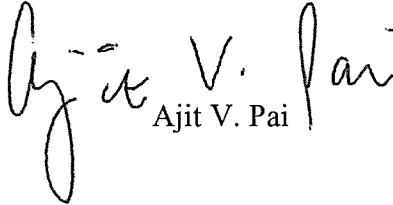
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
U.S. House of Representatives
1111 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Earl Blumenauer:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

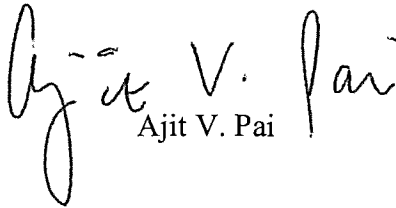
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Barbara Lee
U.S. House of Representatives
2267 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Barbara Lee:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

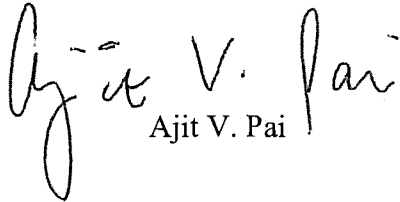
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
U.S. House of Representatives
2136 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Eleanor Holmes Norton:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

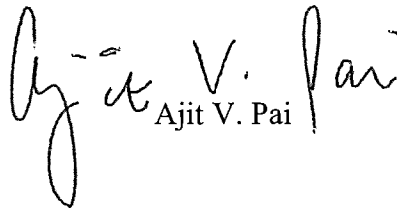
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I agree with you that the National Lifeline Accountability Database and National Verifier are important tools for eliminating this waste, fraud, and abuse. But they are not the only ones, nor will they solve all the problems with the program. It simply isn't prudent to sit idly by when hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are at stake. To address this, in a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* accompanying the *Order* the Commission sought comment on a wide variety of measures to improve the administration of the Lifeline program—from re-empowering state commissions to police Lifeline carriers to partnering with states to stand up the National Verifier, from improving program audits to adopting a self-enforcing budget. We are currently reviewing the record that has been compiled in response to the *Notice* to determine the best path forward,

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

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Bonnie Watson Coleman
U.S. House of Representatives
1535 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Bonnie Watson Coleman:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

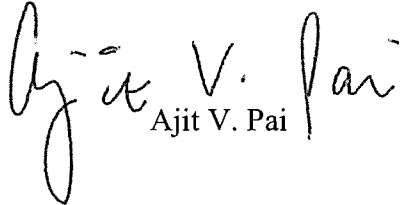
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Bobby L. Rush
U.S. House of Representatives
2188 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Bobby L. Rush:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

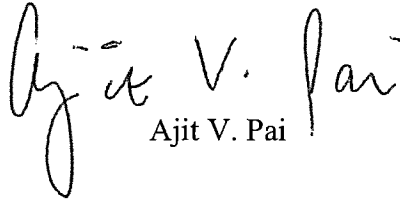
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jim McGovern
U.S. House of Representatives
438 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Jim McGovern:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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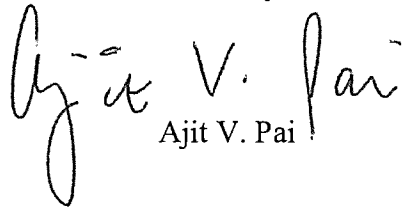
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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Norma J. Torres
U.S. House of Representatives
1713 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Norma J. Torres:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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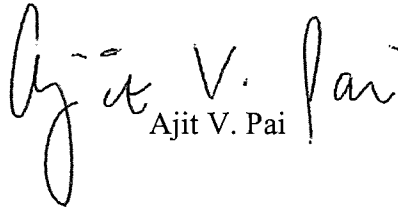
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Raúl M. Grijalva
U.S. House of Representatives
1511 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Raúl M. Grijalva:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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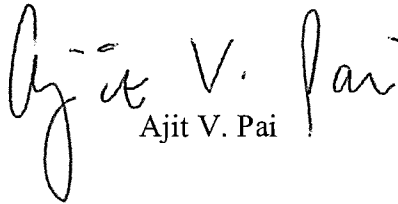
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Bennie Thompson
U.S. House of Representatives
2466 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Bennie Thompson:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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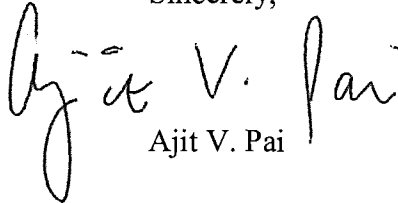
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Luis V. Gutiérrez
U.S. House of Representatives
2408 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Luis V. Gutiérrez:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

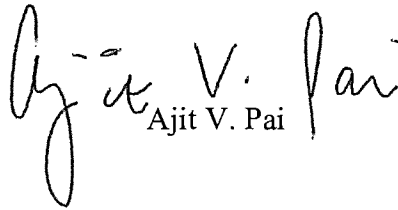
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Tulsi Gabbard
U.S. House of Representatives
1433 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Tulsi Gabbard:

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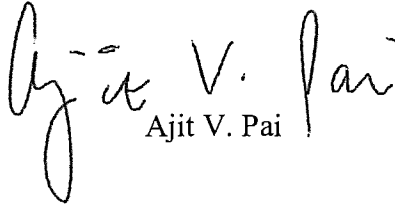
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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Darren Soto
U.S. House of Representatives
1429 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Darren Soto:

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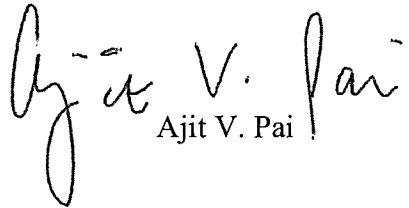
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I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Joyce Beatty
U.S. House of Representatives
133 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Joyce Beatty:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

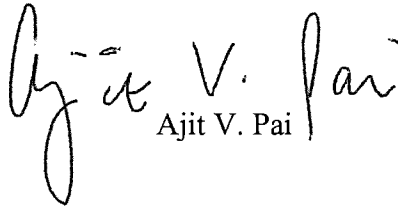
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Don Beyer
U.S. House of Representatives
1119 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Don Beyer:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

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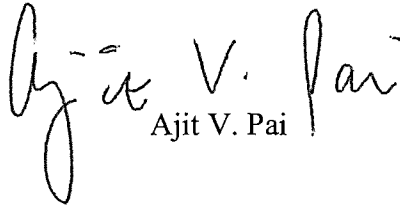
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Page 2—The Honorable Don Beyer

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

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable John Lewis
U.S. House of Representatives
343 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear John Lewis:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

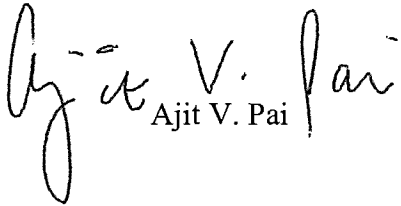
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable David Cicilline
U.S. House of Representatives
2244 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear David Cicilline:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

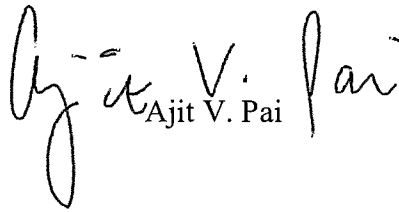
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable John Yarmuth
U.S. House of Representatives
131 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear John Yarmuth:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

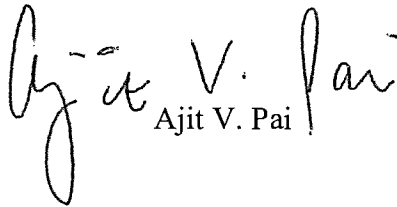
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Robert A. Brady
U.S. House of Representatives
2004 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Robert A. Brady:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

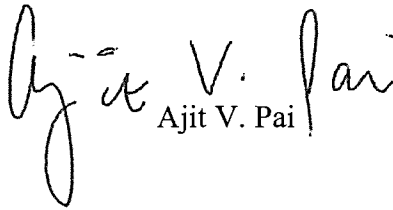
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

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

Dear Ted Lieu:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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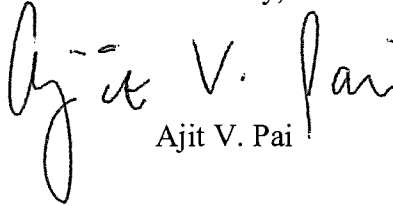
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Betty McCollum
U.S. House of Representatives
2256 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Betty McCollum:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

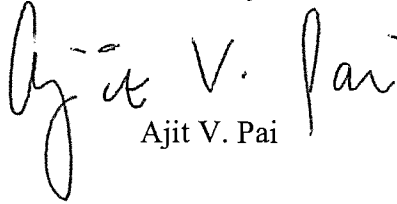
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Cedric L. Richmond
U.S. House of Representatives
420 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Cedric L. Richmond:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

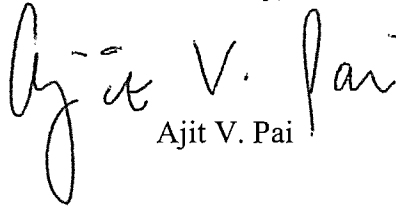
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable John Garamendi
U.S. House of Representatives
2438 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear John Garamendi:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

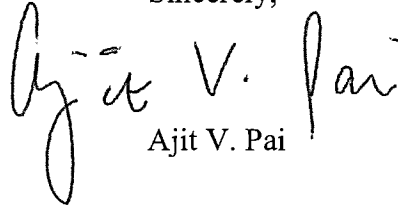
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I agree with you that the National Lifeline Accountability Database and National Verifier are important tools for eliminating this waste, fraud, and abuse. But they are not the only ones, nor will they solve all the problems with the program. It simply isn't prudent to sit idly by when hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are at stake. To address this, in a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* accompanying the *Order* the Commission sought comment on a wide variety of measures to improve the administration of the Lifeline program—from re-empowering state commissions to police Lifeline carriers to partnering with states to stand up the National Verifier, from improving program audits to adopting a self-enforcing budget. We are currently reviewing the record that has been compiled in response to the *Notice* to determine the best path forward,

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

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Louise M. Slaughter
U.S. House of Representatives
2469 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Louise M. Slaughter:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

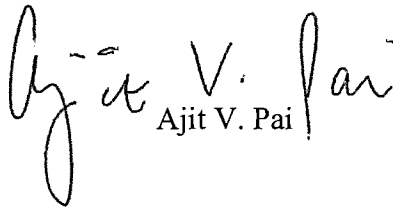
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Dwight Evans
U.S. House of Representatives
1105 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Dwight Evans:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

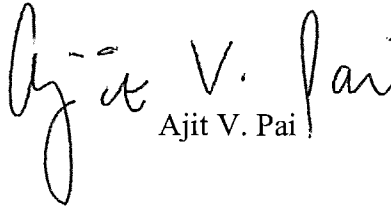
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Terri A. Sewell
U.S. House of Representatives
2201 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Terri A. Sewell:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

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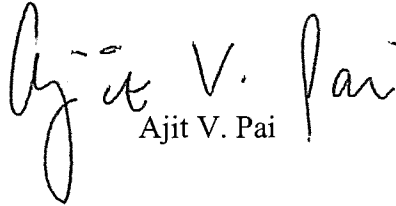
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Page 2—The Honorable Terri A. Sewell

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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
U.S. House of Representatives
2367 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Jan Schakowsky:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

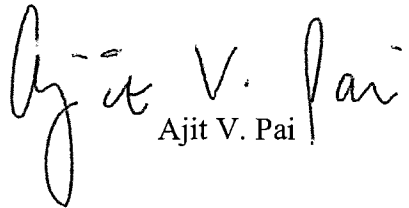
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Lisa Blunt Rochester
U.S. House of Representatives
1123 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Lisa Blunt Rochester:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

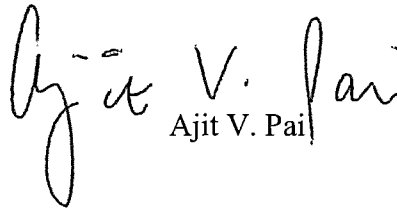
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Ajit V. Pai



Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Mark Pocan
U.S. House of Representatives
1421 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mark Pocan:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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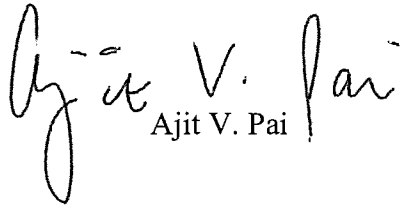
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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Steve Cohen
U.S. House of Representatives
2404 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Steve Cohen:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

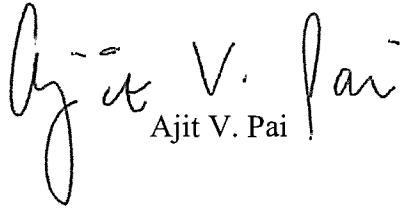
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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Dina Titus
U.S. House of Representatives
2464 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Dina Titus:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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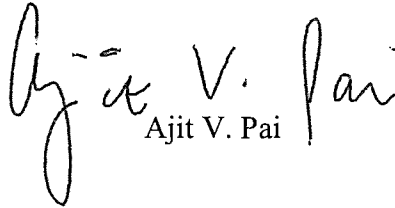
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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Eliot L. Engel
U.S. House of Representatives
2462 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Eliot L. Engel:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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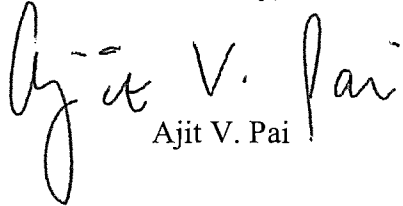
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I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney
U.S. House of Representatives
2308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Carolyn B. Maloney:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

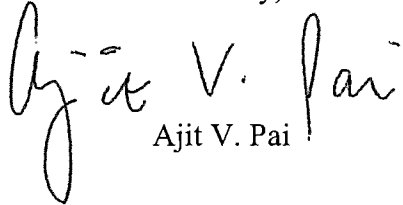
At the same time, I am deeply committed to ensuring that the Commission fulfills its obligation to be a responsible steward of the Universal Service Fund. It is critical to strengthen the Lifeline program's efficacy and integrity by reducing the waste, fraud, and abuse that has run rampant in this program for the better part of a decade. For example, GAO discovered 1,234,929 Lifeline subscribers who apparently were not eligible to participate in the program as well as 6,378 individuals who apparently enrolled or recertified after being reported as deceased. That limited sample alone constituted more than \$137 million in abuse each year. That's money that could be better spent building out broadband in low-income neighborhoods and making broadband more affordable for low-income families and veterans living in rural America and on Tribal lands.

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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Danny K. Davis
U.S. House of Representatives
2159 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Danny K. Davis:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

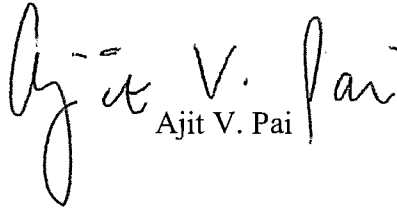
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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Robin Kelly
U.S. House of Representatives
1239 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Robin Kelly:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

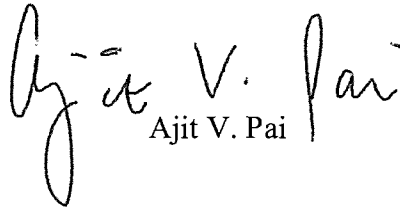
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Alma Adams
U.S. House of Representatives
222 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Alma Adams:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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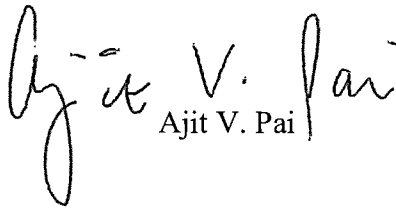
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Grace F. Napolitano
U.S. House of Representatives
1610 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Grace F. Napolitano:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

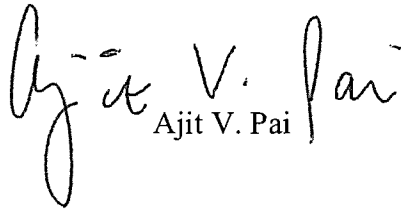
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Alan Lowenthal
U.S. House of Representatives
125 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Alan Lowenthal:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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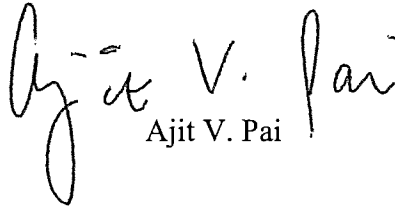
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
U.S. House of Representatives
2186 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Marcy Kaptur:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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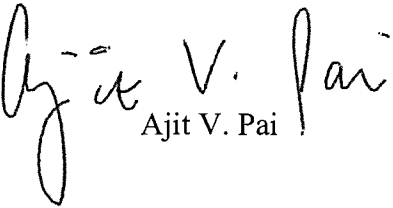
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
U.S. House of Representatives
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Elijah E. Cummings:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

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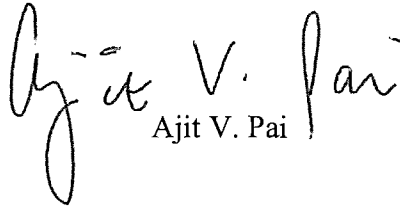
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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Hank Johnson
U.S. House of Representatives
2240 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Hank Johnson:

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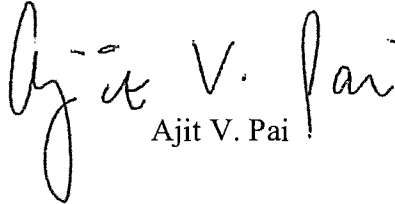
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THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Carol Shea-Porter
U.S. House of Representatives
1530 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Carol Shea-Porter:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

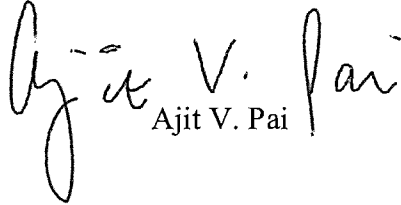
At the same time, I am deeply committed to ensuring that the Commission fulfills its obligation to be a responsible steward of the Universal Service Fund. It is critical to strengthen the Lifeline program's efficacy and integrity by reducing the waste, fraud, and abuse that has run rampant in this program for the better part of a decade. For example, GAO discovered 1,234,929 Lifeline subscribers who apparently were not eligible to participate in the program as well as 6,378 individuals who apparently enrolled or recertified after being reported as deceased. That limited sample alone constituted more than \$137 million in abuse each year. That's money that could be better spent building out broadband in low-income neighborhoods and making broadband more affordable for low-income families and veterans living in rural America and on Tribal lands.

I agree with you that the National Lifeline Accountability Database and National Verifier are important tools for eliminating this waste, fraud, and abuse. But they are not the only ones, nor will they solve all the problems with the program. It simply isn't prudent to sit idly by when hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are at stake. To address this, in a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* accompanying the *Order* the Commission sought comment on a wide variety of measures to improve the administration of the Lifeline program—from re-empowering state commissions to police Lifeline carriers to partnering with states to stand up the National Verifier, from improving program audits to adopting a self-enforcing budget. We are currently reviewing the record that has been compiled in response to the *Notice* to determine the best path forward,

and your letter has been added to that record. The Lifeline program's goal is—or should be—to empower consumers, not companies. And that will be our lodestar as we move forward to ensure that unscrupulous companies stop abusing this important program.

I appreciate your 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

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
U.S. House of Representatives
422 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Colleen Hanabusa:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

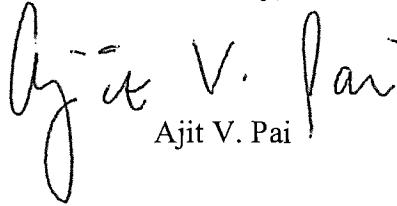
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Bill Foster
U.S. House of Representatives
1224 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Bill Foster:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only "mobile" broadband, which doesn't help consumers who lack home broadband or aren't otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

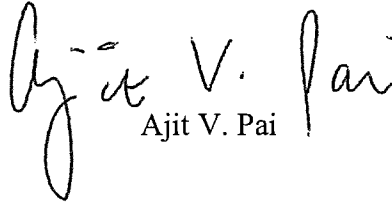
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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 23, 2018

The Honorable Jamie Raskin
U.S. House of Representatives
431 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Jamie Raskin:

Thank you for your letter arguing that the most vulnerable people in our country must have access to affordable communications. I agree with you. I am committed to bridging the digital divide, and like you, I believe the Lifeline program can help do just that.

That is why the Commission adopted the *2017 Lifeline Reform Order*, which seeks to focus Lifeline support where it is most needed and incentivize investment in networks that enable 21st-century connectivity for all Americans. The *Order* increased consumer choice by eliminating restrictions that barred Lifeline consumers from changing Lifeline providers for a year and protected consumers by barring low-quality services that offered mobile broadband in theory but failed to do so in practice (such as Wi-Fi-only “mobile” broadband, which doesn’t help consumers who lack home broadband or aren’t otherwise near a Wi-Fi hotspot like a coffee shop).

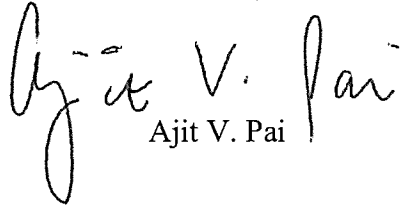
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