

ROGER F. WICKER
MISSISSIPPI

ARMED SERVICES
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION
COMMISSION ON SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

109

SUITE 555
DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-6253
www.wicker.senate.gov

February 7, 2018

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

Dear Chairman Pai,

Advanced communications services are improving the quality and affordability of health care in rural communities throughout the United States. Through innovative telemedicine applications, rural Americans can access specialized health-care services that have traditionally been unavailable or prohibitively expensive in these areas. Because of my state's leadership in telemedicine, Mississippians have seen firsthand how this technology is increasing the overall quality of care, improving patient outcomes, reducing costs, and most importantly, saving lives.

As efforts to deploy broadband to underserved and unserved areas continue, increased connectivity is opening the door for health-care providers to offer new health-care services in innovative ways. Wireless Medical Telemetry Service (WMTS) is one way in which health-care providers can better serve patients in rural areas. Using radio spectrum, WMTS allows doctors and nurses to monitor critical care patients remotely through sensors that send real-time updates about a patient's condition to a hospital or clinic.

The benefits of this technology are significant. WMTS has helped increase survival rates among patients by assisting clinicians' efforts to address health conditions before they worsen. Moreover, WMTS provides patients with more mobility and allows doctors and nurses to monitor multiple patients at one time, increasing the overall efficiency of medical care. The availability of this technology in rural areas is particularly important in Mississippi, given our shortage of doctors and the significant distances that many residents must travel to receive care.

TerreStar Corporation's WMTS proposal promises to provide access to many innovative medical services for small rural health facilities. It has committed to servicing 2,000 hospitals in the U.S. by 2020 using this life-saving technology. This will help rural Mississippians and thousands of other rural Americans receive unprecedented access to essential health-care services.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of TerreStar's WMTS proposal in WT Docket No. 16-290 to provide critical health-care services in rural areas and for your unwavering support and commitment to rural America.

Sincerely,



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

August 3, 2018

The Honorable Roger Wicker
United States Senate
555 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Wicker:

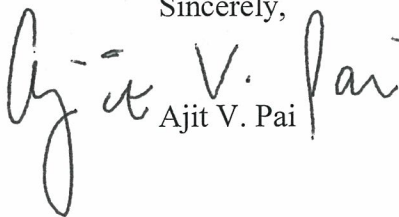
Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of high-quality, affordable health care in rural communities throughout the United States. I agree with you that telemedicine and wireless technologies have great potential to improve patient outcomes and reduce the costs of our health care system.

That's why just this week, with your encouragement and under the leadership of Commissioner Brendan Carr, the Commission took steps toward creating a \$100 million Connected Care pilot program that would facilitate broader participation by low-income families and veterans in telemedicine programs. That's why in June, the Commission increased funding for the Universal Service Fund's Rural Health Care program by \$171 million a year. That's why the Commission's Connect2Health Task Force has partnered with the National Cancer Institute to study how affordable, available broadband connectivity can impact health care delivery and patient health. And that's why the Commission has examined the potential for Wireless Medical Telemetry Services in different spectrum bands.

I agree with you that introducing Wireless Medical Telemetry Services in the 1.4 GHz band is an innovative opportunity. As you may know, TerreStar acquired licenses in that band in 2007 and 2008. Over the subsequent decade, it failed to construct facilities and put that public resource to use for consumers' benefit—resulting in the termination of those licenses under longstanding Commission rules. TerreStar has nonetheless asked the Commission to reinstate these terminated licenses. We have received feedback in the record of that proceeding, and I look forward to reviewing that record to determine the best way forward for the medical community and the American people.

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

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai