



August 30, 2018

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

RE: Accelerating Wireless Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment, WT Docket No. 17-79; Accelerating Wireline Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment, WC Docket No. 17-84; Streamlining Deployment of Small Cell Infrastructure, WT Docket No. 16-421

Dear Chairman Pai,

As broadband becomes ever more essential to communities of color, it is critical that policymakers work to ensure that new networks can be built out as quickly as possible. Efforts to address barriers to deployment at every level of government are thus welcomed and encouraged so that new technologies are available to those who benefit from them the most. For these reasons the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation voices its support for your ongoing work on these fronts and to urge your agency to provide guidance for how to build the next generation of broadband networks in a timely, safe, and ubiquitous manner.

The need for action is particularly acute in the mobile space, where so-called 5G networks are ready to be built out. These systems are expected to dramatically transform the broadband space by making exponentially more wireless capacity available to users, businesses, and innovators. Many expect these connections to not only enhance the everyday user experience, making streaming more seamless and video communications more reliable, for example, but also to disrupt how core services like healthcare and education are provided.

When 5G networks are fully deployed, these systems will enable the real-time delivery of torrents of new information generated from sensors, smartphones, and other wireless devices, allowing for the instantaneous delivery of individualized and interactive services. Tracking health metrics in

this manner, for example, will be an incredible boon in minority communities since people of color are at significantly higher odds of developing the kinds of chronic diseases that are most responsive to such regular monitoring and treatment. A similar dynamic will help to bring better educational service to neighborhoods that have long suffered from a failing public education system. Civic engagement will also benefit as government officials harness these new networks to optimize the delivery of key public services. In short, just about every sector, from agriculture to energy to transportation, stands to benefit from 5G.

Such profound impacts will also be felt in the realm of economic development. Minorities continue to struggle to find jobs, start businesses, and attain the skills needed to thrive in today's digital economy. 5G networks will likely play a key role in addressing these issues by making economic opportunities more readily available to people of color. Fortunately, minorities are already among the most active and creative users of mobile broadband, giving them a leg up in this emerging marketplace. But the full panoply of economic benefits will only be realized if this next generation of wireless connectivity is widely available to all users.

A growing number of cities and states have acted to address inefficiencies in the administrative and regulatory processes impacting 5G deployment by modernizing laws to ensure that they reflect a world where wireless networks are much more distributed in nature. But more comprehensive action is needed from you to clear the path for the full-scale build out of these systems in partnership with state and local governments. We urge you to continue to engage with state and local officials as you work to design comprehensive and clear solutions to 5G deployment that balance the needs and concerns of local communities and industry.

As you work towards formalizing policies to guide 5G deployment, please know that we support your efforts and stand ready to assist in whatever way we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Melanie L. Campbell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Melanie" being more prominent and the last name "Campbell" following in a similar style.

Melanie L. Campbell
President & CEO
National Coalition on Black Civic Participation
(202) 659-4929
melaniec@ncbcp.org