

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

703

September 7, 2018

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

We write today in regards to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC or Commission) Mobility Fund Phase II (MF-II) Challenge Process.

As you are very aware, the funds in the Commission's MF-II will support providers of wireless and broadband services in rural areas in a very significant way. By ensuring those in rural areas can interact with and access the full suite of innovative technologies in today's information age, MF-II stands to increase quality of life for many rural Americans, including in our state of Oklahoma.

To that end, it is important that that any funding allocation decisions are based on accurate data. We have heard concerns from several rural providers in Oklahoma, specifically those providing wireless mobile coverage, that the Commission's request of companies fails to ensure sufficiently accurate maps can be produced to guide the Mobility Fund auction. Challenging those coverage maps is extremely costly for rural carriers, many of whom already operate on tight margins and slim budgets to provide basic services to their subscribers. For instance, prospective challengers must complete time-consuming speed tests to verify the claims by other carriers. Considering the stakes for Oklahomans and other rural residents nationwide, we therefore urge the Commission to critically examine all submissions from all carriers for accuracy and consistency. Areas that are incorrectly deemed as "served" will not receive Universal Service Fund assistance for perhaps a decade, which would adversely affect economic development and general quality of life in rural America.

It is similarly important that the Commission allow adequate time for the evaluation of any challenges to the submissions of other carriers. We appreciate the Commission's approval of a recent Order extending the Challenge Process window by 90 days, as that extension will certainly help this process. But given the cost and labor associated with these challenges, we hope the Commission will work accommodatingly with carriers toward meeting the submission deadline in a timely fashion.

As your office has stated, the MF-II auction will award \$4.53 billion in support over ten years and "it's critical that we get it right."^[1] You have also rightly stated that "[o]ur limited universal service funds for mobile service must be effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack

^[1] Press Release, Chairman Pai Statement on Circulation of Order to Extend Mobility Fund Phase II Challenge Process (August 3, 2018).

unsubsidized 4G LTE service.”^[2] As such, we hope the Commission will consider our recommendations and act appropriately on them.

Sincerely,



James M. Inhofe
United States Senator



James Lankford
United States Senator



Frank D. Lucas
United States Representative



Tom Cole
United States Representative



Markwayne Mullin
United States Representative



Steve Russell
United States Representative

^[2] *Id.*



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

November 29, 2018

The Honorable James M. Inhofe
United States Senate
205 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Inhofe:

Thank you for your letter about broadband mapping. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. As you know, I grew up in Parsons, Kansas, just north of the Oklahoma border, and I have traveled during my time at the Commission to many rural areas throughout the United States. I have seen with my own eyes what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its schools, its libraries, and its hospitals, and for those communities struggling to stay afloat.

I agree that using updated and accurate broadband deployment data is critical to bridging the digital divide. We need to understand where broadband is available and where it is not in order to target our efforts and limited funding to areas that are most in need. That is why the Commission required strict standards for broadband deployment maps and a robust challenge process for Phase II of the Mobility Fund. And that's why I worked with my colleagues to extend the window for submitting challenges by an additional 90 days so that all challengers would have more time to participate in the process.

The Mobility Fund Phase II challenge window is now closed, and Commission staff are, as you suggest, critically examining all submissions from all carriers for accuracy and consistency. I look forward to reviewing the results of the Commission staff's review and ultimately moving forward with the auction so that the rural Americans who have waited far too long for high-quality mobile broadband services can get the connections they need and deserve.

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

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

November 29, 2018

The Honorable Frank D. Lucas
U.S. House of Representatives
2405 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Lucas:

Thank you for your letter about broadband mapping. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. As you know, I grew up in Parsons, Kansas, just north of the Oklahoma border, and I have traveled during my time at the Commission to many rural areas throughout the United States. I have seen with my own eyes what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its schools, its libraries, and its hospitals, and for those communities struggling to stay afloat.

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WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
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November 29, 2018

The Honorable James Lankford
United States Senate
316 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Lankford:

Thank you for your letter about broadband mapping. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. As you know, I grew up in Parsons, Kansas, just north of the Oklahoma border, and I have traveled during my time at the Commission to many rural areas throughout the United States. I have seen with my own eyes what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its schools, its libraries, and its hospitals, and for those communities struggling to stay afloat.

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WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

November 29, 2018

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Mullin:

Thank you for your letter about broadband mapping. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. As you know, I grew up in Parsons, Kansas, just north of the Oklahoma border, and I have traveled during my time at the Commission to many rural areas throughout the United States. I have seen with my own eyes what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its schools, its libraries, and its hospitals, and for those communities struggling to stay afloat.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF
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November 29, 2018

The Honorable Steve Russell
U.S. House of Representatives
128 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Russell:

Thank you for your letter about broadband mapping. Closing the digital divide is my top priority. As you know, I grew up in Parsons, Kansas, just north of the Oklahoma border, and I have traveled during my time at the Commission to many rural areas throughout the United States. I have seen with my own eyes what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its schools, its libraries, and its hospitals, and for those communities struggling to stay afloat.

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November 29, 2018

The Honorable Tom Cole
U.S. House of Representatives
2467 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Cole:

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