



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 22, 2017

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

Dear Congressman Meeks:

Thank you for your letters regarding the Wireline Competition Bureau's *Order on Reconsideration*, which affected nine companies' participation in the Lifeline program. I appreciate your views, which will be entered into the record of the proceeding.

One of my main goals as FCC Chairman is closing the digital divide. And I recognize unaffordability as a key barrier to digital opportunity. Last September, I explained when announcing my Digital Empowerment Agenda that "[a]lthough gigabit services and mobile broadband are becoming common features of wealthier, metropolitan areas, they aren't universal." There is a real digital divide in our country, and as we seek to address this problem, I believe the Lifeline program is an important tool for helping to connect all Americans.

Regarding the *Order*, I would make several important points.

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*Second*, eight of the nine affected carriers had no Lifeline customers.

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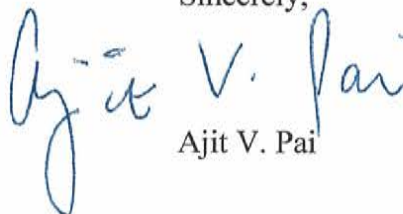
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*Lastly*, every dollar that is spent on subsidizing somebody who doesn't need the help by definition does not go to someone who does. That means that the Commission needs to make sure that there are strong safeguards against waste, fraud, and abuse before expanding the program to new providers. But our federal safeguards are insufficient: My investigation last year into these matters revealed that providers could indiscriminately override checks that are supposed to prevent wasteful and fraudulent activities. (These checks include common-sense steps like verifying the identity of would-be Lifeline recipients.) From October 2014 until June 2016, wireless resellers had overridden such safeguards 4,291,647 times in total. The investigation also uncovered other loopholes, including one that let a company claim subsidies for approximately 22,000 phantom subscribers each month in the state of Michigan. And the National Verifier—a new database intended to verify eligibility to participate in the Lifeline program—does not currently exist and will not start operating until the end of 2017. Further, it is not scheduled to cover all states until 2019. We need to make sure that safeguards are strong and effective in order to direct subsidies to American consumers who most need the help.

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

March 22, 2017

The Honorable Grace Meng  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1317 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Meng:

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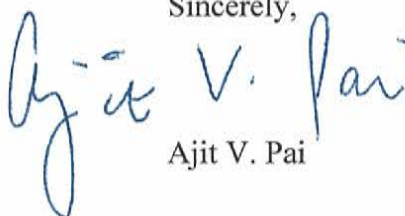
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March 22, 2017

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

Dear Congresswoman Moore:

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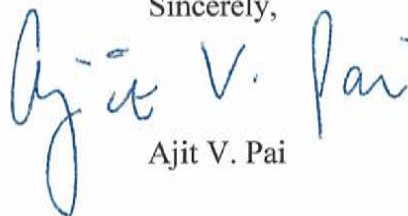
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Ajit V. Pai



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 22, 2017

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

Dear Congressman Nadler:

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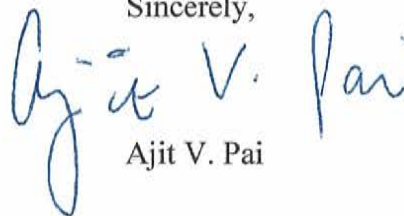
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March 22, 2017

The Honorable Richard E. Neal  
U.S. House of Representatives  
341 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Neal:

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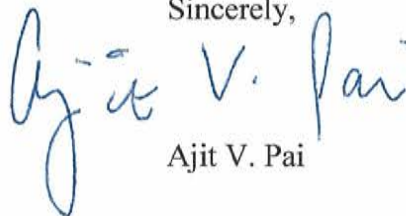
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
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OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 22, 2017

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

Dear Congresswoman Norton:

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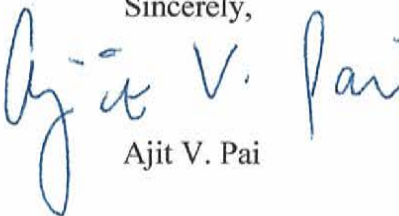
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March 22, 2017

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta  
U.S. House of Representatives  
228 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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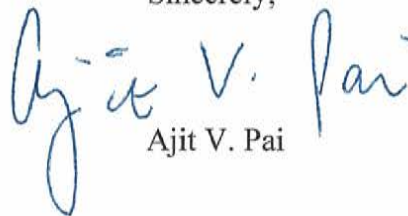
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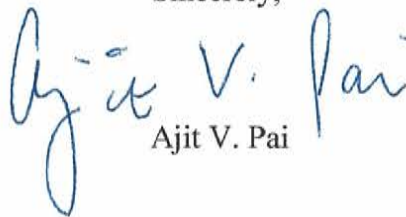
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I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai





FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 22, 2017

The Honorable Jared Polis  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1727 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Polis:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Wireline Competition Bureau's *Order on Reconsideration*, which affected nine companies' participation in the Lifeline program. I appreciate your views, which will be entered into the record of the proceeding.

One of my main goals as FCC Chairman is closing the digital divide. And I recognize unaffordability as a key barrier to digital opportunity. Last September, I explained when announcing my Digital Empowerment Agenda that "[a]lthough gigabit services and mobile broadband are becoming common features of wealthier, metropolitan areas, they aren't universal." There is a real digital divide in our country, and as we seek to address this problem, I believe the Lifeline program is an important tool for helping to connect all Americans.

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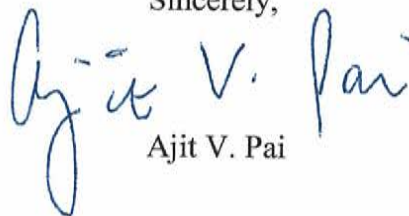
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 22, 2017

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

Dear Congressman Raskin:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Wireline Competition Bureau's *Order on Reconsideration*, which affected nine companies' participation in the Lifeline program. I appreciate your views, which will be entered into the record of the proceeding.

One of my main goals as FCC Chairman is closing the digital divide. And I recognize unaffordability as a key barrier to digital opportunity. Last September, I explained when announcing my Digital Empowerment Agenda that "[a]lthough gigabit services and mobile broadband are becoming common features of wealthier, metropolitan areas, they aren't universal." There is a real digital divide in our country, and as we seek to address this problem, I believe the Lifeline program is an important tool for helping to connect all Americans.

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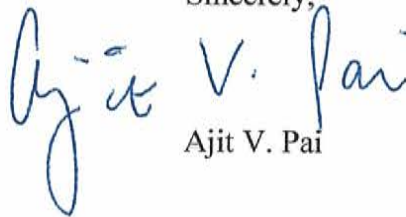
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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 22, 2017

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

Dear Congressman Rush:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Wireline Competition Bureau's *Order on Reconsideration*, which affected nine companies' participation in the Lifeline program. I appreciate your views, which will be entered into the record of the proceeding.

One of my main goals as FCC Chairman is closing the digital divide. And I recognize unaffordability as a key barrier to digital opportunity. Last September, I explained when announcing my Digital Empowerment Agenda that "[a]lthough gigabit services and mobile broadband are becoming common features of wealthier, metropolitan areas, they aren't universal." There is a real digital divide in our country, and as we seek to address this problem, I believe the Lifeline program is an important tool for helping to connect all Americans.

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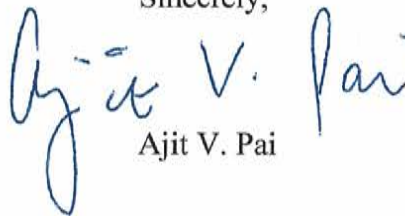
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 22, 2017

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

Dear Congressman Serrano:

Thank you for your letters regarding the Wireline Competition Bureau's *Order on Reconsideration*, which affected nine companies' participation in the Lifeline program. I appreciate your views, which will be entered into the record of the proceeding.

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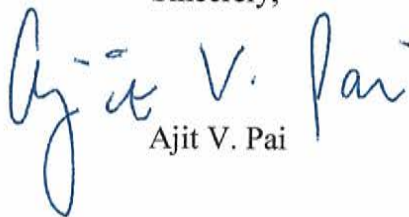
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Ajit V. Pai





OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 22, 2017

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

Dear Congressman Soto:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Wireline Competition Bureau's *Order on Reconsideration*, which affected nine companies' participation in the Lifeline program. I appreciate your views, which will be entered into the record of the proceeding.

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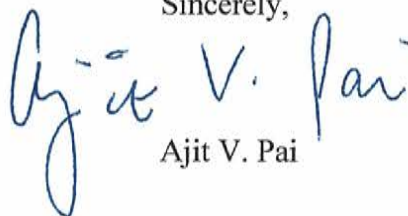
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Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 22, 2017

The Honorable Jackie Speier  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2465 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Speier:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Wireline Competition Bureau's *Order on Reconsideration*, which affected nine companies' participation in the Lifeline program. I appreciate your views, which will be entered into the record of the proceeding.

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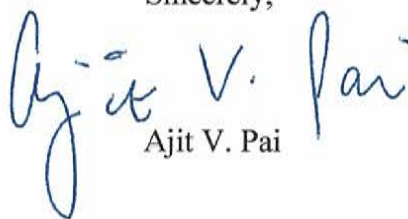
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 22, 2017

The Honorable Eric Swalwell  
U.S. House of Representatives  
129 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Swalwell:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Wireline Competition Bureau's *Order on Reconsideration*, which affected nine companies' participation in the Lifeline program. I appreciate your views, which will be entered into the record of the proceeding.

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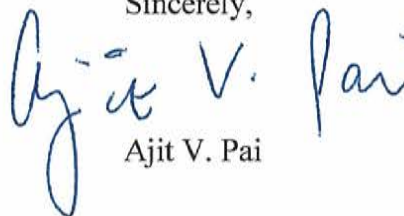
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 22, 2017

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

Dear Congressman Takano:

Thank you for your letters regarding the Wireline Competition Bureau's *Order on Reconsideration*, which affected nine companies' participation in the Lifeline program. I appreciate your views, which will be entered into the record of the proceeding.

One of my main goals as FCC Chairman is closing the digital divide. And I recognize unaffordability as a key barrier to digital opportunity. Last September, I explained when announcing my Digital Empowerment Agenda that "[a]lthough gigabit services and mobile broadband are becoming common features of wealthier, metropolitan areas, they aren't universal." There is a real digital divide in our country, and as we seek to address this problem, I believe the Lifeline program is an important tool for helping to connect all Americans.

Regarding the *Order*, I would make several important points.

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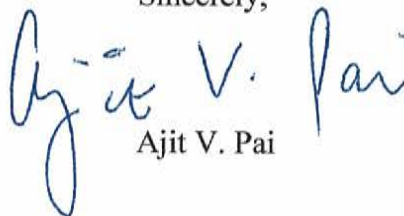
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Ajit V. Pai





OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 22, 2017

The Honorable Juan C. Vargas  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1605 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Vargas:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Wireline Competition Bureau's *Order on Reconsideration*, which affected nine companies' participation in the Lifeline program. I appreciate your views, which will be entered into the record of the proceeding.

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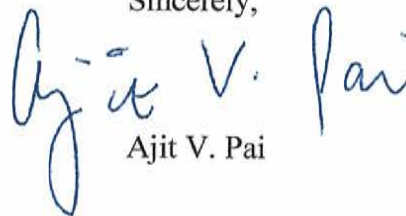
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I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 22, 2017

The Honorable Peter J. Visclosky  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2328 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Visclosky:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Wireline Competition Bureau's *Order on Reconsideration*, which affected nine companies' participation in the Lifeline program. I appreciate your views, which will be entered into the record of the proceeding.

One of my main goals as FCC Chairman is closing the digital divide. And I recognize unaffordability as a key barrier to digital opportunity. Last September, I explained when announcing my Digital Empowerment Agenda that "[a]lthough gigabit services and mobile broadband are becoming common features of wealthier, metropolitan areas, they aren't universal." There is a real digital divide in our country, and as we seek to address this problem, I believe the Lifeline program is an important tool for helping to connect all Americans.

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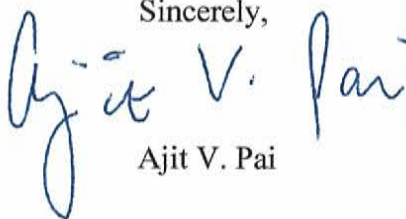
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 22, 2017

The Honorable Peter Welch  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2303 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Welch:

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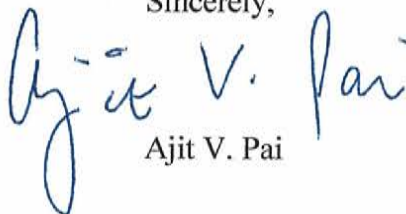
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Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 22, 2017

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

Dear Congressman Yarmuth:

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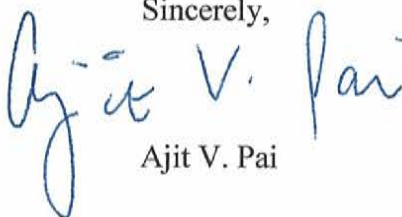
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