



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

March 14, 2018

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

Dear Congressman Peterson:

Thank you for your letter in support of providing additional funding and flexibility for broadband deployment in rural America. Your views are very important and will be entered into the record of our proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review.

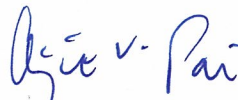
Since my first day as Chairman, I've said that my highest priority is making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas, and a key way to reach this goal in rural areas is updating the FCC's high-cost universal service program to encourage cooperative and other small, rural carriers to build more online infrastructure.

But I've heard from community leaders, Congress, and carriers that insufficient, unpredictable funding has kept them from reaching this goal. That is why I shared with my fellow commissioners an order that would promote more high-speed broadband deployment in rural areas.

If adopted, the order would provide over \$500 million in additional funding to cooperative and small rural carriers—including those participating in the Alternative Connect America Model (A-CAM) plan. And it seeks public input on both further increasing support to current A-CAM recipients and on giving legacy rate-of-return carriers a new chance to elect model-based support. Increased funding will boost broadband deployment in rural America, and the accompanying reforms will put our high-cost system on a more efficient path, helping to ensure that every American can benefit from the digital revolution.

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

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai