



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 28, 2018

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

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 Mobility Fund II (MF-II) initial eligible areas map that was publicly released on February 27, 2018. In 2011, the previous FCC unanimously decided to phase down legacy high-cost support for mobile providers and redirect our limited Universal Service Funds (USF) to the unserved and underserved areas that need it the most. In February 2017, the Commission unanimously decided to allocate up to \$4.53 billion to provide ongoing support over the next 10 years to those primarily rural areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. And in August 2017, the Commission unanimously adopted a framework for a challenge process to determine the areas that would be eligible for support in the MF-II auction. This challenge process is based upon lessons learned from the Connect America Fund and Mobility Fund I, and starts with the most standardized and granular mobile coverage data the Commission has ever collected from providers. We recognize, however, that providers submit projections of coverage, and that the provider coverage data therefore is (and should be) subject to challenge based upon actual, on the ground speed tests.

The initial eligible areas map is an aggregation of the coverage data submitted by providers and USAC subsidy data. It is critical to note that the initial eligible areas map is only the beginning of the process. Indeed, the Commission established a lengthy and robust challenge process in consultation with a variety of stakeholders precisely because we anticipated, based on past experience, that parties would raise concerns with the initial eligible areas map.

Specifically, starting tomorrow, there will be a seven-month-long challenge process which tests providers' projections against actual observations. During the first step of this process, interested parties will have the opportunity to test the accuracy of the coverage maps by submitting speed tests to the USAC challenge portal. In order to assist those interested in submitting challenges, the Commission will soon be releasing a map of those areas that did not make the initial eligibility map because only one unsubsidized carrier claims to provide the requisite level of service. These are the areas that are most susceptible of being successfully challenged. This is a major advantage: participating entities will be able to prioritize their efforts and target very specific areas. Speaking of participation, in April and May, FCC staff will hold multiple events online and in different regions of the country designed to help state, local, and Tribal governmental entities get involved in the challenge process.

Once the deadline for challenges has passed, providers will have the opportunity to rebut these speed tests and Commission staff will adjudicate these challenges. After this extensive process, the Commission will release a final map of areas eligible for support in the MF-II auction.

Like you, the FCC is focused on ensuring that our limited funds are effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. This is a vital part of our strategy toward closing the wireless dimension of the digital divide. Indeed, that is why the Mobility Fund Phase II auction was conceived by a united Commission 2,344 days ago and why the current Commission was united in moving forward in this manner. Commencing the auction will deliver connectivity to many Americans who've already waited too long for it. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 28, 2018

The Honorable Maggie Hassan  
United States Senate  
B85 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hassan:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Mobility Fund II (MF-II) initial eligible areas map that was publicly released on February 27, 2018. In 2011, the previous FCC unanimously decided to phase down legacy high-cost support for mobile providers and redirect our limited Universal Service Funds (USF) to the unserved and underserved areas that need it the most. In February 2017, the Commission unanimously decided to allocate up to \$4.53 billion to provide ongoing support over the next 10 years to those primarily rural areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. And in August 2017, the Commission unanimously adopted a framework for a challenge process to determine the areas that would be eligible for support in the MF-II auction. This challenge process is based upon lessons learned from the Connect America Fund and Mobility Fund I, and starts with the most standardized and granular mobile coverage data the Commission has ever collected from providers. We recognize, however, that providers submit projections of coverage, and that the provider coverage data therefore is (and should be) subject to challenge based upon actual, on the ground speed tests.

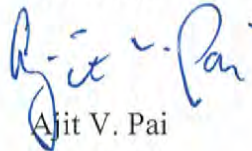
The initial eligible areas map is an aggregation of the coverage data submitted by providers and USAC subsidy data. It is critical to note that the initial eligible areas map is only the beginning of the process. Indeed, the Commission established a lengthy and robust challenge process in consultation with a variety of stakeholders precisely because we anticipated, based on past experience, that parties would raise concerns with the initial eligible areas map.

Specifically, starting tomorrow, there will be a seven-month-long challenge process which tests providers' projections against actual observations. During the first step of this process, interested parties will have the opportunity to test the accuracy of the coverage maps by submitting speed tests to the USAC challenge portal. In order to assist those interested in submitting challenges, the Commission will soon be releasing a map of those areas that did not make the initial eligibility map because only one unsubsidized carrier claims to provide the requisite level of service. These are the areas that are most susceptible of being successfully challenged. This is a major advantage: participating entities will be able to prioritize their efforts and target very specific areas. Speaking of participation, in April and May, FCC staff will hold multiple events online and in different regions of the country designed to help state, local, and Tribal governmental entities get involved in the challenge process.

Once the deadline for challenges has passed, providers will have the opportunity to rebut these speed tests and Commission staff will adjudicate these challenges. After this extensive process, the Commission will release a final map of areas eligible for support in the MF-II auction.

Like you, the FCC is focused on ensuring that our limited funds are effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. This is a vital part of our strategy toward closing the wireless dimension of the digital divide. Indeed, that is why the Mobility Fund Phase II auction was conceived by a united Commission 2,344 days ago and why the current Commission was united in moving forward in this manner. Commencing the auction will deliver connectivity to many Americans who've already waited too long for it. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A" and a long horizontal stroke.

Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 28, 2018

The Honorable Cory Gardner  
United States Senate  
354 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Gardner:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Mobility Fund II (MF-II) initial eligible areas map that was publicly released on February 27, 2018. In 2011, the previous FCC unanimously decided to phase down legacy high-cost support for mobile providers and redirect our limited Universal Service Funds (USF) to the unserved and underserved areas that need it the most. In February 2017, the Commission unanimously decided to allocate up to \$4.53 billion to provide ongoing support over the next 10 years to those primarily rural areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. And in August 2017, the Commission unanimously adopted a framework for a challenge process to determine the areas that would be eligible for support in the MF-II auction. This challenge process is based upon lessons learned from the Connect America Fund and Mobility Fund I, and starts with the most standardized and granular mobile coverage data the Commission has ever collected from providers. We recognize, however, that providers submit projections of coverage, and that the provider coverage data therefore is (and should be) subject to challenge based upon actual, on the ground speed tests.

The initial eligible areas map is an aggregation of the coverage data submitted by providers and USAC subsidy data. It is critical to note that the initial eligible areas map is only the beginning of the process. Indeed, the Commission established a lengthy and robust challenge process in consultation with a variety of stakeholders precisely because we anticipated, based on past experience, that parties would raise concerns with the initial eligible areas map.

Specifically, starting tomorrow, there will be a seven-month-long challenge process which tests providers' projections against actual observations. During the first step of this process, interested parties will have the opportunity to test the accuracy of the coverage maps by submitting speed tests to the USAC challenge portal. In order to assist those interested in submitting challenges, the Commission will soon be releasing a map of those areas that did not make the initial eligibility map because only one unsubsidized carrier claims to provide the requisite level of service. These are the areas that are most susceptible of being successfully challenged. This is a major advantage: participating entities will be able to prioritize their efforts and target very specific areas. Speaking of participation, in April and May, FCC staff will hold multiple events online and in different regions of the country designed to help state, local, and Tribal governmental entities get involved in the challenge process.

Once the deadline for challenges has passed, providers will have the opportunity to rebut these speed tests and Commission staff will adjudicate these challenges. After this extensive process, the Commission will release a final map of areas eligible for support in the MF-II auction.

Like you, the FCC is focused on ensuring that our limited funds are effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. This is a vital part of our strategy toward closing the wireless dimension of the digital divide. Indeed, that is why the Mobility Fund Phase II auction was conceived by a united Commission 2,344 days ago and why the current Commission was united in moving forward in this manner. Commencing the auction will deliver connectivity to many Americans who've already waited too long for it. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai

P.S. Hope all is well with you and the family!  
Sorry the Broncos missed out on Kirk Cousins  
(well, not really sorry, but hey - this Chiefs  
ban is at least trying).



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 28, 2018

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
United States Senate  
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Moran:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Mobility Fund II (MF-II) initial eligible areas map that was publicly released on February 27, 2018. In 2011, the previous FCC unanimously decided to phase down legacy high-cost support for mobile providers and redirect our limited Universal Service Funds (USF) to the unserved and underserved areas that need it the most. In February 2017, the Commission unanimously decided to allocate up to \$4.53 billion to provide ongoing support over the next 10 years to those primarily rural areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. And in August 2017, the Commission unanimously adopted a framework for a challenge process to determine the areas that would be eligible for support in the MF-II auction. This challenge process is based upon lessons learned from the Connect America Fund and Mobility Fund I, and starts with the most standardized and granular mobile coverage data the Commission has ever collected from providers. We recognize, however, that providers submit projections of coverage, and that the provider coverage data therefore is (and should be) subject to challenge based upon actual, on the ground speed tests.

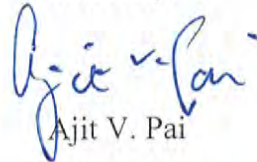
The initial eligible areas map is an aggregation of the coverage data submitted by providers and USAC subsidy data. It is critical to note that the initial eligible areas map is only the beginning of the process. Indeed, the Commission established a lengthy and robust challenge process in consultation with a variety of stakeholders precisely because we anticipated, based on past experience, that parties would raise concerns with the initial eligible areas map.

Specifically, starting tomorrow, there will be a seven-month-long challenge process which tests providers' projections against actual observations. During the first step of this process, interested parties will have the opportunity to test the accuracy of the coverage maps by submitting speed tests to the USAC challenge portal. In order to assist those interested in submitting challenges, the Commission will soon be releasing a map of those areas that did not make the initial eligibility map because only one unsubsidized carrier claims to provide the requisite level of service. These are the areas that are most susceptible of being successfully challenged. This is a major advantage: participating entities will be able to prioritize their efforts and target very specific areas. Speaking of participation, in April and May, FCC staff will hold multiple events online and in different regions of the country designed to help state, local, and Tribal governmental entities get involved in the challenge process.

Once the deadline for challenges has passed, providers will have the opportunity to rebut these speed tests and Commission staff will adjudicate these challenges. After this extensive process, the Commission will release a final map of areas eligible for support in the MF-II auction.

Like you, the FCC is focused on ensuring that our limited funds are effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. This is a vital part of our strategy toward closing the wireless dimension of the digital divide. Indeed, that is why the Mobility Fund Phase II auction was conceived by a united Commission 2,344 days ago and why the current Commission was united in moving forward in this manner. Commencing the auction will deliver connectivity to many Americans who've already waited too long for it. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai

P.S. Hope all's well, Senator! With any luck, the next time we see each other, we'll be toasting a KU championship! #RockChalk





FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 28, 2018

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Pat Roberts  
United States Senate  
109 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Roberts:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Mobility Fund II (MF-II) initial eligible areas map that was publicly released on February 27, 2018. In 2011, the previous FCC unanimously decided to phase down legacy high-cost support for mobile providers and redirect our limited Universal Service Funds (USF) to the unserved and underserved areas that need it the most. In February 2017, the Commission unanimously decided to allocate up to \$4.53 billion to provide ongoing support over the next 10 years to those primarily rural areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. And in August 2017, the Commission unanimously adopted a framework for a challenge process to determine the areas that would be eligible for support in the MF-II auction. This challenge process is based upon lessons learned from the Connect America Fund and Mobility Fund I, and starts with the most standardized and granular mobile coverage data the Commission has ever collected from providers. We recognize, however, that providers submit projections of coverage, and that the provider coverage data therefore is (and should be) subject to challenge based upon actual, on the ground speed tests.

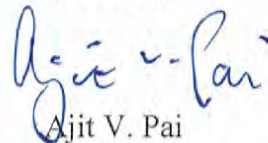
The initial eligible areas map is an aggregation of the coverage data submitted by providers and USAC subsidy data. It is critical to note that the initial eligible areas map is only the beginning of the process. Indeed, the Commission established a lengthy and robust challenge process in consultation with a variety of stakeholders precisely because we anticipated, based on past experience, that parties would raise concerns with the initial eligible areas map.

Specifically, starting tomorrow, there will be a seven-month-long challenge process which tests providers' projections against actual observations. During the first step of this process, interested parties will have the opportunity to test the accuracy of the coverage maps by submitting speed tests to the USAC challenge portal. In order to assist those interested in submitting challenges, the Commission will soon be releasing a map of those areas that did not make the initial eligibility map because only one unsubsidized carrier claims to provide the requisite level of service. These are the areas that are most susceptible of being successfully challenged. This is a major advantage: participating entities will be able to prioritize their efforts and target very specific areas. Speaking of participation, in April and May, FCC staff will hold multiple events online and in different regions of the country designed to help state, local, and Tribal governmental entities get involved in the challenge process.

Once the deadline for challenges has passed, providers will have the opportunity to rebut these speed tests and Commission staff will adjudicate these challenges. After this extensive process, the Commission will release a final map of areas eligible for support in the MF-II auction.

Like you, the FCC is focused on ensuring that our limited funds are effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. This is a vital part of our strategy toward closing the wireless dimension of the digital divide. Indeed, that is why the Mobility Fund Phase II auction was conceived by a united Commission 2,344 days ago and why the current Commission was united in moving forward in this manner. Commencing the auction will deliver connectivity to many Americans who've already waited too long for it. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A".

Ajit V. Pai

P.S. Senator, hope all's well with you - and congratulations on your newest grandchild!



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 28, 2018

The Honorable Angus King  
United States Senate  
133 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator King:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Mobility Fund II (MF-II) initial eligible areas map that was publicly released on February 27, 2018. In 2011, the previous FCC unanimously decided to phase down legacy high-cost support for mobile providers and redirect our limited Universal Service Funds (USF) to the unserved and underserved areas that need it the most. In February 2017, the Commission unanimously decided to allocate up to \$4.53 billion to provide ongoing support over the next 10 years to those primarily rural areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. And in August 2017, the Commission unanimously adopted a framework for a challenge process to determine the areas that would be eligible for support in the MF-II auction. This challenge process is based upon lessons learned from the Connect America Fund and Mobility Fund I, and starts with the most standardized and granular mobile coverage data the Commission has ever collected from providers. We recognize, however, that providers submit projections of coverage, and that the provider coverage data therefore is (and should be) subject to challenge based upon actual, on the ground speed tests.

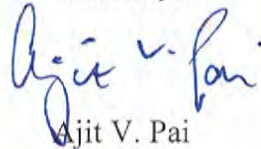
The initial eligible areas map is an aggregation of the coverage data submitted by providers and USAC subsidy data. It is critical to note that the initial eligible areas map is only the beginning of the process. Indeed, the Commission established a lengthy and robust challenge process in consultation with a variety of stakeholders precisely because we anticipated, based on past experience, that parties would raise concerns with the initial eligible areas map.

Specifically, starting tomorrow, there will be a seven-month-long challenge process which tests providers' projections against actual observations. During the first step of this process, interested parties will have the opportunity to test the accuracy of the coverage maps by submitting speed tests to the USAC challenge portal. In order to assist those interested in submitting challenges, the Commission will soon be releasing a map of those areas that did not make the initial eligibility map because only one unsubsidized carrier claims to provide the requisite level of service. These are the areas that are most susceptible of being successfully challenged. This is a major advantage: participating entities will be able to prioritize their efforts and target very specific areas. Speaking of participation, in April and May, FCC staff will hold multiple events online and in different regions of the country designed to help state, local, and Tribal governmental entities get involved in the challenge process.

Once the deadline for challenges has passed, providers will have the opportunity to rebut these speed tests and Commission staff will adjudicate these challenges. After this extensive process, the Commission will release a final map of areas eligible for support in the MF-II auction.

Like you, the FCC is focused on ensuring that our limited funds are effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. This is a vital part of our strategy toward closing the wireless dimension of the digital divide. Indeed, that is why the Mobility Fund Phase II auction was conceived by a united Commission 2,344 days ago and why the current Commission was united in moving forward in this manner. Commencing the auction will deliver connectivity to many Americans who've already waited too long for it. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 28, 2018

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senate  
302 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Mobility Fund II (MF-II) initial eligible areas map that was publicly released on February 27, 2018. In 2011, the previous FCC unanimously decided to phase down legacy high-cost support for mobile providers and redirect our limited Universal Service Funds (USF) to the unserved and underserved areas that need it the most. In February 2017, the Commission unanimously decided to allocate up to \$4.53 billion to provide ongoing support over the next 10 years to those primarily rural areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. And in August 2017, the Commission unanimously adopted a framework for a challenge process to determine the areas that would be eligible for support in the MF-II auction. This challenge process is based upon lessons learned from the Connect America Fund and Mobility Fund I, and starts with the most standardized and granular mobile coverage data the Commission has ever collected from providers. We recognize, however, that providers submit projections of coverage, and that the provider coverage data therefore is (and should be) subject to challenge based upon actual, on the ground speed tests.


The initial eligible areas map is an aggregation of the coverage data submitted by providers and USAC subsidy data. It is critical to note that the initial eligible areas map is only the beginning of the process. Indeed, the Commission established a lengthy and robust challenge process in consultation with a variety of stakeholders precisely because we anticipated, based on past experience, that parties would raise concerns with the initial eligible areas map.

Specifically, starting tomorrow, there will be a seven-month-long challenge process which tests providers' projections against actual observations. During the first step of this process, interested parties will have the opportunity to test the accuracy of the coverage maps by submitting speed tests to the USAC challenge portal. In order to assist those interested in submitting challenges, the Commission will soon be releasing a map of those areas that did not make the initial eligibility map because only one unsubsidized carrier claims to provide the requisite level of service. These are the areas that are most susceptible of being successfully challenged. This is a major advantage: participating entities will be able to prioritize their efforts and target very specific areas. Speaking of participation, in April and May, FCC staff will hold multiple events online and in different regions of the country designed to help state, local, and Tribal governmental entities get involved in the challenge process.

Once the deadline for challenges has passed, providers will have the opportunity to rebut these speed tests and Commission staff will adjudicate these challenges. After this extensive process, the Commission will release a final map of areas eligible for support in the MF-II auction.

Like you, the FCC is focused on ensuring that our limited funds are effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. This is a vital part of our strategy toward closing the wireless dimension of the digital divide. Indeed, that is why the Mobility Fund Phase II auction was conceived by a united Commission 2,344 days ago and why the current Commission was united in moving forward in this manner. Commencing the auction will deliver connectivity to many Americans who've already waited too long for it. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

March 28, 2018

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Gary Peters  
United States Senate  
724 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Peters:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Mobility Fund II (MF-II) initial eligible areas map that was publicly released on February 27, 2018. In 2011, the previous FCC unanimously decided to phase down legacy high-cost support for mobile providers and redirect our limited Universal Service Funds (USF) to the unserved and underserved areas that need it the most. In February 2017, the Commission unanimously decided to allocate up to \$4.53 billion to provide ongoing support over the next 10 years to those primarily rural areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. And in August 2017, the Commission unanimously adopted a framework for a challenge process to determine the areas that would be eligible for support in the MF-II auction. This challenge process is based upon lessons learned from the Connect America Fund and Mobility Fund I, and starts with the most standardized and granular mobile coverage data the Commission has ever collected from providers. We recognize, however, that providers submit projections of coverage, and that the provider coverage data therefore is (and should be) subject to challenge based upon actual, on the ground speed tests.

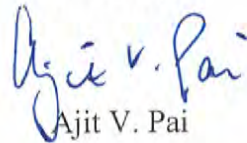
The initial eligible areas map is an aggregation of the coverage data submitted by providers and USAC subsidy data. It is critical to note that the initial eligible areas map is only the beginning of the process. Indeed, the Commission established a lengthy and robust challenge process in consultation with a variety of stakeholders precisely because we anticipated, based on past experience, that parties would raise concerns with the initial eligible areas map.

Specifically, starting tomorrow, there will be a seven-month-long challenge process which tests providers' projections against actual observations. During the first step of this process, interested parties will have the opportunity to test the accuracy of the coverage maps by submitting speed tests to the USAC challenge portal. In order to assist those interested in submitting challenges, the Commission will soon be releasing a map of those areas that did not make the initial eligibility map because only one unsubsidized carrier claims to provide the requisite level of service. These are the areas that are most susceptible of being successfully challenged. This is a major advantage: participating entities will be able to prioritize their efforts and target very specific areas. Speaking of participation, in April and May, FCC staff will hold multiple events online and in different regions of the country designed to help state, local, and Tribal governmental entities get involved in the challenge process.

Once the deadline for challenges has passed, providers will have the opportunity to rebut these speed tests and Commission staff will adjudicate these challenges. After this extensive process, the Commission will release a final map of areas eligible for support in the MF-II auction.

Like you, the FCC is focused on ensuring that our limited funds are effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. This is a vital part of our strategy toward closing the wireless dimension of the digital divide. Indeed, that is why the Mobility Fund Phase II auction was conceived by a united Commission 2,344 days ago and why the current Commission was united in moving forward in this manner. Commencing the auction will deliver connectivity to many Americans who've already waited too long for it. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

  
Ajit V. Pai

P.S. Senator, I hope all's well with you and your wife! My better half sends her regards. Also, is there any chance I could snag five minutes of your time regarding an issue in the U.P.?





FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 28, 2018

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
United States Senate  
260 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Blunt:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Mobility Fund II (MF-II) initial eligible areas map that was publicly released on February 27, 2018. In 2011, the previous FCC unanimously decided to phase down legacy high-cost support for mobile providers and redirect our limited Universal Service Funds (USF) to the unserved and underserved areas that need it the most. In February 2017, the Commission unanimously decided to allocate up to \$4.53 billion to provide ongoing support over the next 10 years to those primarily rural areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. And in August 2017, the Commission unanimously adopted a framework for a challenge process to determine the areas that would be eligible for support in the MF-II auction. This challenge process is based upon lessons learned from the Connect America Fund and Mobility Fund I, and starts with the most standardized and granular mobile coverage data the Commission has ever collected from providers. We recognize, however, that providers submit projections of coverage, and that the provider coverage data therefore is (and should be) subject to challenge based upon actual, on the ground speed tests.

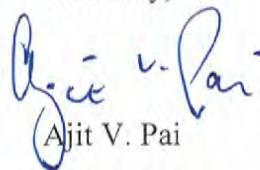
The initial eligible areas map is an aggregation of the coverage data submitted by providers and USAC subsidy data. It is critical to note that the initial eligible areas map is only the beginning of the process. Indeed, the Commission established a lengthy and robust challenge process in consultation with a variety of stakeholders precisely because we anticipated, based on past experience, that parties would raise concerns with the initial eligible areas map.

Specifically, starting tomorrow, there will be a seven-month-long challenge process which tests providers' projections against actual observations. During the first step of this process, interested parties will have the opportunity to test the accuracy of the coverage maps by submitting speed tests to the USAC challenge portal. In order to assist those interested in submitting challenges, the Commission will soon be releasing a map of those areas that did not make the initial eligibility map because only one unsubsidized carrier claims to provide the requisite level of service. These are the areas that are most susceptible of being successfully challenged. This is a major advantage: participating entities will be able to prioritize their efforts and target very specific areas. Speaking of participation, in April and May, FCC staff will hold multiple events online and in different regions of the country designed to help state, local, and Tribal governmental entities get involved in the challenge process.

Once the deadline for challenges has passed, providers will have the opportunity to rebut these speed tests and Commission staff will adjudicate these challenges. After this extensive process, the Commission will release a final map of areas eligible for support in the MF-II auction.

Like you, the FCC is focused on ensuring that our limited funds are effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. This is a vital part of our strategy toward closing the wireless dimension of the digital divide. Indeed, that is why the Mobility Fund Phase II auction was conceived by a united Commission 2,344 days ago and why the current Commission was united in moving forward in this manner. Commencing the auction will deliver connectivity to many Americans who've already waited too long for it. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part.

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

March 28, 2018

The Honorable Thom Tillis  
United States Senate  
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Tillis:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Mobility Fund II (MF-II) initial eligible areas map that was publicly released on February 27, 2018. In 2011, the previous FCC unanimously decided to phase down legacy high-cost support for mobile providers and redirect our limited Universal Service Funds (USF) to the unserved and underserved areas that need it the most. In February 2017, the Commission unanimously decided to allocate up to \$4.53 billion to provide ongoing support over the next 10 years to those primarily rural areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. And in August 2017, the Commission unanimously adopted a framework for a challenge process to determine the areas that would be eligible for support in the MF-II auction. This challenge process is based upon lessons learned from the Connect America Fund and Mobility Fund I, and starts with the most standardized and granular mobile coverage data the Commission has ever collected from providers. We recognize, however, that providers submit projections of coverage, and that the provider coverage data therefore is (and should be) subject to challenge based upon actual, on the ground speed tests.

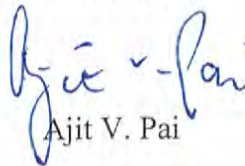
The initial eligible areas map is an aggregation of the coverage data submitted by providers and USAC subsidy data. It is critical to note that the initial eligible areas map is only the beginning of the process. Indeed, the Commission established a lengthy and robust challenge process in consultation with a variety of stakeholders precisely because we anticipated, based on past experience, that parties would raise concerns with the initial eligible areas map.

Specifically, starting tomorrow, there will be a seven-month-long challenge process which tests providers' projections against actual observations. During the first step of this process, interested parties will have the opportunity to test the accuracy of the coverage maps by submitting speed tests to the USAC challenge portal. In order to assist those interested in submitting challenges, the Commission will soon be releasing a map of those areas that did not make the initial eligibility map because only one unsubsidized carrier claims to provide the requisite level of service. These are the areas that are most susceptible of being successfully challenged. This is a major advantage: participating entities will be able to prioritize their efforts and target very specific areas. Speaking of participation, in April and May, FCC staff will hold multiple events online and in different regions of the country designed to help state, local, and Tribal governmental entities get involved in the challenge process.

Once the deadline for challenges has passed, providers will have the opportunity to rebut these speed tests and Commission staff will adjudicate these challenges. After this extensive process, the Commission will release a final map of areas eligible for support in the MF-II auction.

Like you, the FCC is focused on ensuring that our limited funds are effectively and accurately targeted to areas that lack unsubsidized 4G LTE service. This is a vital part of our strategy toward closing the wireless dimension of the digital divide. Indeed, that is why the Mobility Fund Phase II auction was conceived by a united Commission 2,344 days ago and why the current Commission was united in moving forward in this manner. Commencing the auction will deliver connectivity to many Americans who've already waited too long for it. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is stylized and cursive, with the first name "Ajit" being the most prominent part.

Ajit V. Pai