

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927  
Minority (202) 225-3641

August 19, 2020

The Honorable Ajit V. Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai:

We write to urge you to take immediate action to help bring high-speed internet service to rural tribal land by giving tribes more time to apply for licenses in the 2.5 GHz Band. We are concerned that the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) failure to provide adequate time for tribes to take full advantage of the 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Priority Window means fewer tribes will be connected to lifesaving internet service.

The coronavirus has underscored that the digital divide is a deadly chasm, but the FCC can help address this issue. Tribes have been hit particularly hard during the COVID-19 pandemic, and high-speed internet service helps governments better succeed when it comes to public health interventions. The Rural Tribal Priority Window is one important remedy to the digital divide for Indian Country, but without more time, it will not succeed.

Many tribal leaders have implored you to extend the tribal window by 180 days,<sup>1</sup> but you have only provided a 30-day extension. It is clear, however, that more is desperately needed, given the competing demands that have been placed on tribes because of the virus.<sup>2</sup> That is why we urge you now to extend the tribal priority window by an additional 150 days beyond the new deadline you have set. If you truly intend for tribes to take full advantage of the priority window despite the challenges the pandemic presents, you must give them more time to apply.

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Letter from the National Congress of American Indians to Chairman Ajit Pai (Apr. 22, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Federal Communications Commission, *In the Matter of Transforming the 2.5 GHz Band*, Memorandum and Order, WT Docket No. 18-120 (July 31, 2019) (DA 20-819).

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We respectfully request a response by August 28, 2020, and thank you for your attention to this important matter. Should you have additional questions regarding this request, please contact AJ Brown of the Committee staff at (202) 225-2927.

Sincerely,



Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Chairman



Mike Doyle  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Communications  
and Technology