

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 31, 2017

Honorable Ajit Pai, Michael O'Rielly, Mignon Clyburn, Jessica Rosenworcel, Brendan Carr  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioners:

We applaud the efforts of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to streamline and strengthen the federal High-Cost Universal Service Fund (USF). This program is critical to achieving our shared national broadband goals and closing the digital divide.

Yet, as we and many others have noted consistently in recent years, a lack of resources to meet these national goals is undermining investment and consumer access to affordable broadband across much of rural America. For this reason, we write to encourage the FCC to take the much-needed step of addressing this USF budget shortfall.

Earlier this year, approximately 160 members of Congress raised similar concerns in letters to the FCC. Since these letters were sent, many providers have continued to experience a significant reduction in support. In the ensuing months, many of us have continued to press the FCC to resolve these concerns. We believe that the FCC is best positioned to identify a solution to the budget shortfall that is limiting access to reliable and affordable broadband in rural communities.

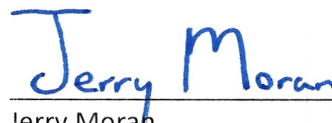
While we recognize that a thoughtful long-term solution to the budget shortfall will take time and effort to identify and assess, many of the providers that serve rural consumers and businesses in our states have already begun to feel the pain of an arbitrary budget cap on High-Cost USF support. We urge the FCC to take action as quickly as possible to ensure the High-Cost USF program provides sufficient and predictable support to help deliver affordable, high-quality broadband to rural consumers. At a minimum, we ask that you ensure that there is no reduction in funds allocated to or collected for the High-Cost program until you have reached a comprehensive solution to High-Cost funding.

Thank you for your commitment to this important program and the millions of rural consumers who benefit from it. We look forward to both quick action and a comprehensive plan that effectively responds to this crisis.

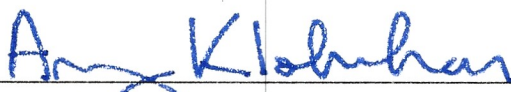
Sincerely,



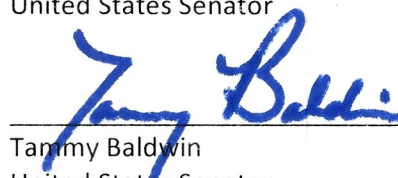
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United States Senator



Jerry Moran  
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator

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John Barrasso, M.D.  
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United States Senator

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United States Senator

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John Boozman  
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Shelley Moore Capito  
United States Senator

*Maria Cantwell*

Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator

*Susan M. Collins*

Susan Collins  
United States Senator

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United States Senator

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United States Senator

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Cory Gardner  
United States Senator

*John Cornyn*

John Cornyn  
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*James Risch*

James Risch  
United States Senator

*Tim Scott*

Tim Scott  
United States Senator

*Luther Strange*

Luther Strange  
United States Senator

*Thom Tillis*

Thom Tillis  
United States Senator