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March 13, 2018

The Honorable Ajit Pai, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554


Dear Chairman Pai,

We write to express concerns with Federal Communication Commission (FCC) regulations that are causing significant delays on certain school broadband projects in rural states. School districts and telecommunications carriers in Montana are making tremendous progress to deliver high-speed broadband to schools in rural America. They are leveraging private, state and federal resources to ensure our kids can access the tools required for education in the 21st Century. Despite this progress, unnecessary regulations at the FCC are causing some schools to be left in the dark. It is unacceptable for bureaucratic red tape to stand in the way of high-speed internet being delivered to rural classrooms. As such, we urge you to take immediate corrective actions.

An example of a technical barrier that is blocking high-speed internet deployment is a recently instituted questionnaire that asks parties to provide unnecessary information to the federal government. The questionnaire asks for excessive information that is difficult for companies and small school districts to deliver to the FCC. The questionnaire is leading to long delays if not outright denial of projects. You must not let burdensome paperwork stand between Montana students and their access to critical educational material.

A quality public education is the foundation of our democracy and our future workforce. To ensure our children are prepared for a globally connected economy and for 21st century jobs, it is vital that all classrooms are equipped with high-speed internet. We stand ready to work with the FCC to reduce bureaucratic barriers and enhance opportunities for high-speed internet deployment. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Jon Tester
United States Senator


Steve Bullock
Governor of Montana