



February 7, 2019

***Ex Parte Notice***

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

**RE: *Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90; Accelerating Wireless Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment, WT Docket No. 17-79; Accelerating Wireline Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment, WC Docket No. 17-84***

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Tuesday, February 5, 2019, members and staff of NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association (“NTCA”) as identified on the accompanying page met with Chairman Ajit Pai and his special counsel, Preston Wise.

NTCA expressed thanks to the Chairman and his colleagues and staff at the Federal Communications Commission (the “Commission”) for the order with respect to high-cost universal service fund (“USF”) support adopted at the Commission’s December open meeting. NTCA members described their intent to deploy additional broadband in 2019 for the benefit of rural consumers and businesses based upon the greater predictability provided by that order. NTCA members also discussed the importance of future-proof fiber networks in achieving the nation’s wireless and wired broadband infrastructure objectives, concerns about the processes by which USF performance testing requirements will be implemented and the precise scope of those requirements, and the severe negative consumer impacts anticipated by the prospect of the USF rate floor policy effectively compelling operators to raise local voice telephony rates for many rural Americans by up to nearly \$9 per month in coming months.

Thank you for your attention to this correspondence. Pursuant to Section 1.1206 of the Commission’s rules, a copy of this letter is being filed via ECFS.

Sincerely,

/s/ Michael R. Romano  
Michael R. Romano  
Senior Vice President –  
Industry Affairs & Business Development

cc: Chairman Ajit Pai  
Preston Wise

## NTCA ATTENDEES

Kevin Beyer, Federated Telephone Cooperative and Farmers Mutual Telephone Company  
Allen Hoopes, Silver Star Communications  
Fred Johnson, Farmers Telecommunications Cooperative  
Don Bitz, Triangle Communications  
Keith Oliver, Home Telephone Co.  
John Klatt, Lakeland Communications Group, LLC  
Barry Adair, Wabash Communications Co-op  
Mike Grisham, Shawnee Telephone Co.  
Ron Hinds, GRM Networks  
Doug Boone, Premier Communications  
Bill Hegmann, Southwest Arkansas Telephone Cooperative, Inc.  
Rusty Moore, Big Bend Telephone Co.  
Don Richards, Richards, Elder & Green LLP  
Denny Law, Golden West Telecommunications  
Jonathan West, Twin Lakes Telephone Cooperative  
Randy Houdek, Venture Communications Cooperative  
Ryan Boone, Premier Communications  
Colleen Jamison, Jamison Law LLC  
Shirley Bloomfield, NTCA  
Michael Romano, NTCA