



April 12, 2021

VIA ECFS

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary, Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street, NE
Washington, DC 20554

RE: *Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90; Expanding Broadband Service Through the ACAM Program, RM No. 11868*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Friday, April 9, 2021, the undersigned on behalf of NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association (“NTCA”) spoke with Ramesh Nagarajan, acting wireline legal advisor to Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel, regarding several matters in the above-referenced proceeding.

Specifically, NTCA renewed its prior requests for the Commission to waive the application of the budget control mechanism to certain kinds of universal service support in the face of cash flow concerns and other challenges brought on by the pandemic. *See, e.g., Ex Parte* Letter from Michael R. Romano, Sr. Vice President, NTCA, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, Commission, WC Docket No. 10-90 (filed May 7, 2020). The application of support cuts would be particularly harmful as providers strive to keep Americans facing economic challenges brought on by the pandemic online despite unpaid bills. I emphasized the pressing nature of such relief given that it appears providers may face significantly increased budget control cuts starting in the next few months, representing an unfortunate and unnecessary “reward” for their increased efforts to expand broadband coverage and deliver higher-quality broadband services to consumers desperately in need of such access in the midst of a pandemic. Similarly, given the importance of continued and accelerated advancement of broadband in the current environment, NTCA reiterated support for the Commission to take prompt action on the petition submitted by the ACAM Broadband Coalition to update, enhance, and expedite deployment obligations for certain providers in exchange for several years of additional support. *See* Petition for Expedited Rulemaking of the ACAM Broadband Coalition, RM No. 11868 (filed Oct. 30, 2020).

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
NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association

cc: Ramesh Nagarajan

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