

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 10, 2020

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Pai:

On behalf of our constituents who seek to close the digital divide, we write to underscore the importance of advancing broadband in rural America. As you well know, many of our constituents who live in remote and rural areas without access to reliable broadband internet face immense challenges in all aspects of their lives. The digital divide is holding back too many students, seniors, farmers, small businesses, and Indian reservations in our home states. These members of our community deserve the same opportunities as our constituents living in connected urban and suburban areas.

The Commission's adoption last year of a final order in the TV white space (TVWS) reconsideration proceeding and new mapping data collection methods demonstrate that the Commission is committed to pursuing all technology opportunities to bridge the digital divide and appreciates the importance of having accurate data if we are to correctly target resources at the areas that are in need of broadband. We have followed the deployment of TVWS pilots across the nation, and we appreciate that this modality reaches residents in some of the most difficult-to-serve parts of the country. We fully support the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) mission to bridge the digital divide and agree with you that TVWS is an important part of this effort.

We appreciate the FCC's work to clear the regulatory barriers to rural broadband innovation and applaud the Commission's recent vote to adopt a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to address the regulatory hurdles that remain surrounding TVWS. We were especially pleased to see that the NPRM addresses the use of TVWS for narrowband applications, such as precision agriculture, as well as moving platforms, such as school buses. We encourage the FCC to move quickly and adopt final rules from the NPRM by the end of 2020.

The unique characteristics of TVWS spectrum make this technology an important tool for bridging the digital divide in rural America. It allows for better coverage with signals travelling further and penetrating trees and walls better than other spectrum bands. By updating its TVWS spectrum rules, the Commission would allow for more flexibility and uses of TVWS technology enabling greater broadband opportunities like the Internet of Things (IoT) and better broadband service coverage by increased antenna height and power, while also protecting licensed incumbents.

We thank the FCC for its consideration of these requests and the dedication it has shown to bridging the digital divide by clearing regulatory barriers to rural broadband innovation. We encourage the Commission to build on the progress they have made this year by approving the

TVWS NPRM and adding improved guidance to existing Form 477 instructions so that we can more quickly begin to gather accurate broadband availability data.

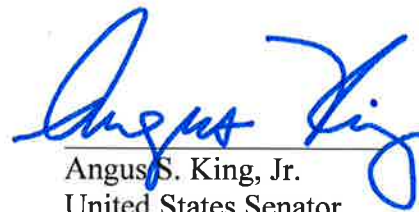
We look forward to continuing to work alongside the Commission on this important issue. Rural Americans can no longer afford to be left on the wrong side of the digital divide.

Sincerely,



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Kevin Cramer  
United States Senator



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Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator