

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
ARMED SERVICES
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

August 14, 2019

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

Dear Chairman Pai,

While I am encouraged to hear that your agency is planning to implement a formal public feedback mechanism to improve broadband coverage maps, the people of West Virginia need help now. Until a more viable process is established, I will be providing you with real coverage data from people on the ground in West Virginia and a brief description of the challenges they face personally, professionally, and economically as a result of their unreliable broadband service.

I received correspondence from a constituent in Charleston, West Virginia, the capital of our beautiful state. This growing area is home to our state government, world-class healthcare institutions, and a vibrant array of local businesses, artists, and musicians. The people of Charleston rely on high-speed internet to govern, provide treatment, and conduct business. Additionally, the Charleston area is home to the largest school district in the state, meaning many students require high-speed internet in order to do homework or attend online classes. Any impediment to internet access could be detrimental to this bustling area.

West Virginia is a wonderful place to live with vibrant, caring communities that value connection. However, the lack of broadband access is having devastating impacts on residents' ability to work, learn, and connect in my state. Ironically, the same things that attract people to live and work in my beautiful state - our tall mountains, lush forests, rolling hills and roaring rapids - make broadband deployment astronomically expensive.

Using the Ookla Speed Testing Application on a Samsung Galaxy S9+ to test their fixed broadband service from Frontier Communications, my office received the following speed results from Charleston:

- 2.75mbps down / 0.68mbps up

These numbers are well below your agency's definition of broadband and the advertised speed they were given by their provider. I hope you will use this data to validate the information West Virginia's broadband providers have submitted to the FCC and ensure that they are eligible for any and all relevant broadband grants and other resources. Places like Charleston depend on the promise of universal service, and it is our job to make good on that promise.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator