

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.

My office received speed tests from the town of Petersburg, West Virginia, located within a short drive of Smoke Hole Caverns, Seneca Rocks, Spruce Knob, and the greater Dolly Sods wilderness area. These places are some of West Virginia's most popular attractions, especially for folks who like to fish, hike, bike, hunt, raft and experience all the incredible natural beauty that West Virginia has to offer.

For tourists traveling from areas such as Washington D.C., Petersburg is the last stop before entering the Monongahela National Forest. Reliable broadband connectivity is something both tourists and residents of the Petersburg area lack consistently, and this is having devastating impacts on the tourism industry in my state, one of our largest economic drivers. Ironically, the same things that attract people to visit my beautiful state - our tall mountains, lush forests, rolling hills and roaring rapids - make broadband deployment astronomically expensive.

Using the Frontier Internet Speed Test Tool Application on an iPad to test their mobile broadband service from Frontier Communications, my office received the following speed results from Petersburg:

- 2.2mbps down / 0.2mbps 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 Petersburg 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