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## United States Senate

June 25, 2020

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

I write today to follow up on the outstanding telehealth applications from Montana health care providers that are currently before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). I request an update on the applications from Big Horn Community Healthcare Center, Benefis Hospital, Southwest Community Healthcare Center, and Bozeman Health Hospital.

In the wake of the unprecedented public health and economic turmoil from the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress worked quickly to pass the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. This aggressive response included \$200 million to the FCC to support telehealth expansion by providing telecommunications services, information services, and devices necessary to enable the provision of telehealth. I am glad that several health providers in my state plan to utilize this program and have submitted their applications.

However, with almost \$160 million funds already out the door, I am concerned about the FCC's implementation of this program. The FCC's decision to distribute funds to providers based in areas that have a high rate of coronavirus cases at the time of the application leaves providers looking for preventive measures out of luck. My state responded quickly and effectively to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus, but the fight is not over. Telehealth allows providers to continue to offer excellent care while reducing exposure to COVID-19. My state cannot afford to be left behind.

It is critical in the fight to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, Montana has access to all resources intended by Congress. Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter. I look forward to your swift response.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester

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