

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927  
Minority (202) 225-3641

June 12, 2020

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

To better protect the health of Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure the fair distribution of public funds, we write to request that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) provide additional transparency to the public, and Congress, regarding the awards it is making under the COVID-19 Telehealth Program that Congress created in the CARES Act.<sup>1</sup> Additional transparency and oversight is vital for ensuring these funds are spent in a way that best mitigates the devastating ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Congress appropriated \$200 million to the FCC in the CARES Act to “address [the] coronavirus by providing telecommunications services, information services, and devices necessary to enable the provision of telehealth services.”<sup>2</sup> As of June 10, 2020, the FCC has awarded \$104.98 million of the total \$200 million in appropriated funds as part of what the FCC has called the COVID-19 Telehealth Program.<sup>3</sup>

While the FCC has posted weekly updates of funding awards, we are troubled by the lack of transparency regarding the health care providers who have applied but have not yet received an award. We have heard reports that many health care providers are facing issues obtaining funds, particularly those serving tribal lands. Similarly, health care providers report they have

---

<sup>1</sup> See Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Pub. L. No. 116-136 (2020).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Federal Communications Commission, *FCC Surpasses \$100 Million in Approved COVID-19 Telehealth Program Applications*, Press Release (June 10, 2020).

been unable to receive funding for some important telehealth equipment that we believe should be covered under the law.

Given the reports indicating that close to half of all doctors are using telehealth services to treat patients during the pandemic,<sup>4</sup> Congressional oversight of the funding awards is critical, and the FCC must provide more public transparency of its decisions.

We therefore make the following requests of the FCC, consistent with applicable law and regulations:

1. By June 19, 2020, please provide, on your public facing website, a docket that includes all of the applications the Commission has received for the COVID-19 Telehealth Program, updated weekly;
2. By June 19, 2020, for such applications, please provide which applications have been approved, updated weekly;
3. By June 19, 2020, for such applications that have been approved, please provide the date on which funds were actually dispersed, updated weekly; and
4. By June 19, 2020, for such applications that have been approved, please provide a summary of any uses or devices that were not approved for reimbursement, updated weekly.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. If you have any questions, please contact Gerald Leverich of the Majority Staff at (202) 225-2927.

Sincerely,



Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Chairman



Mike Doyle  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Communications  
and Technology

---

<sup>4</sup> Fierce Healthcare, *Half of Physicians now Using Telehealth as COVID-19 Changes Practice Operations* (Apr. 23, 2020) ([www.fiercehealthcare.com/practices/half-physicians-now-using-telehealth-as-covid-changes-practice-operations](http://www.fiercehealthcare.com/practices/half-physicians-now-using-telehealth-as-covid-changes-practice-operations)).

The Honorable Ajit V. Pai

June 12, 2020

Page 3

cc: The Honorable Michael O’Rielly, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission

The Honorable Brendan Carr, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission

The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner, Federal Communications  
Commission

The Honorable Geoffrey Starks, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission