June 1, 2020

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

We write in support of the “5G Upgrade Order,” which the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) will consider during its Open Meeting on June 9, 2020. During these unprecedented times, connectivity has remained a key component to supporting the economy, providing access to telehealth services, and facilitating distance learning. As the wireless industry continues to make upgrades to its networks, promote competition, and roll out new 5G services, this Order marks the next major step that the Commission can take to promote broadband buildout across our great country. Reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens to promote broadband deployment is a top priority for Congress, and we urge the Commission to approve this Order at your June Open Meeting.

The 5G Upgrade Order will allow companies to improve their services in our communities now, when they need it the most. It builds on Congress’ work on the SPECTRUM Act in 2012, which contained an important provision that promotes connectivity through collocation. Congress recognized that it is far more efficient and effective to promote broadband deployment and competition in the marketplace by utilizing existing infrastructure. Section 6409(a) of SPECTRUM Act provides that collocating new antennas and replacing or removing older antennas are nonsubstantial changes that should not require the same reviews as building new towers. The goal of the SPECTRUM Act was to ensure that these nonsubstantial changes would have streamlined processes for approval.

The Commission passed strong rules during the last decade to put Section 6409(a) into effect, which helped upgrade our networks to 4G. Now, wireless providers are moving to win a global race to deploy advanced, 5G networks, so it is time for the Commission to revisit these rules and to find ways to speed 5G deployment. This proposed Order would provide needed
guidance and clarity that will help our communities benefit from greater connectivity and keep innovation in America.

Thank you for your leadership on this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Evan Viau or Kate O’Connor of the Minority Committee Staff at (202) 225-3641.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

Greg Walden
Republican Leader
Committee on Energy and Commerce

Robert E. Latta
Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology

Fred Upton
Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Energy

John Shimkus
Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change

Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Health

Steve Scalise
Member of Congress

Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Brett Guthrie
Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations