

KYRSTEN SINEMA
ARIZONA

COMMITTEES

BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION

HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

United States Senate

SH-317
HART BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-4521

ARIZONA:
2200 E. CAMELBACK RD, SUITE 120
PHOENIX, AZ 85016
(602) 598-7327

<http://sinema.senate.gov>

June 10, 2019

Chairman Ajit Pai
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

As you know, in May 2018, the Federal Communications Commission released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking concerning the *Transforming of the 2.5 GHz Band* (WT Docket No, 18-120; DA 18-647). Included in this proposed rule is the establishment of local priority filing windows for new EBS License issuance for Tribal Nations and educational entities. I write today in support of this proposal.

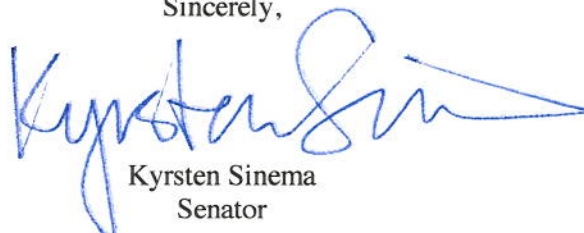
Access to broadband is critical for education in the 21st Century. The EBS program has helped foster programs that tackle the homework gap and digital divide by providing needed spectrum for broadband services. In urban areas, EBS licensees are providing much-needed broadband that makes use of the extensive continuous footprint constructed by commercial service providers. The EBS spectrum also supports valuable educational uses such as Wi-Fi on school buses and portable hotspots for students without home internet access. In rural areas, educational institutions have become broadband providers for their communities that otherwise have few options for internet access.

Arizona is home to 22 federally-recognized Native American Tribes and over 350,000 individual Native Americans, one of the largest Native American populations in the United States. Despite many initiatives to increase rural access to broadband, tribal lands still remain part of the most disconnected areas in the nation. Currently, only about 32 percent of people living on tribal lands have access to broadband. To combat this challenge, the Havasupai Tribe in Arizona is using the EBS spectrum to close this digital divide and increase educational outcomes.

The creation of priority windows for tribes and educational entities would provide the FCC with the opportunity to expand rural broadband, accelerate 5G deployment, close the digital divide, and bridge the homework gap. As such, I support the FCC's proposal to establish priority filing windows for Tribal Nations and educational entities. I respectfully urge you to include the priority filing windows for Tribes and educational entities in any final rule.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Kyrsten Sinema
Senator