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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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JIM COOPER

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December 9, 2016

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

The Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) has denied more than \$50 million in E-Rate funds to members of the Sweetwater City Schools Consortium. Most of that funding was denied by USAC in October 2015. The Consortium appealed that decision to the FCC on May 9, 2016. A final decision on that appeal has not been made and is long overdue.

Missed deadlines and delays have been an ongoing pattern. It took the USAC three years before deciding to deny E-Rate funding to the Sweetwater City Schools Consortium. In addition, the FCC missed its own 90-day decision deadline of August 8. As of the date of this letter, 214 days have passed since the Consortium submitted its appeal. No response has been received; this delay is inexcusable.

Students and teachers need decisions, not delays. One of the impacted school districts, Cheatham County Schools, is located in my congressional district. Since USAC denied funding, Cheatham County has lost more than \$1.4 million. Cheatham County has done its best to plug the gap, but the 2017 school year is quickly approaching and the school district faces a significant budget shortfall. It is counting on a final decision on its appeal. Students and teachers shouldn't be punished for bureaucratic red tape and unnecessary delays.

The FCC needs to resolve this issue by immediately ruling on the Consortium's appeal. If a ruling has not been made and announced to the Consortium by the receipt of this letter, please provide me with the following information within 3 business days:

- the current status of the Consortium's appeal;
- a detailed explanation for the delayed decision past the 90-day deadline;
- the expected date when the FCC will make its ruling; and
- the expected date that the FCC will inform the Consortium of its decision.

Thank you, and I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Jim Cooper
Member of Congress

cc: Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael O'Rielly
Commissioner Ajit Pai
Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel