

KYRSTEN SINEMA  
ARIZONA

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

ARIZONA:  
3333 E. CAMELBACK RD, SUITE 200  
PHOENIX, AZ 85018  
(602) 598-7327

<http://sinema.senate.gov>

## United States Senate

October 17, 2019

### COMMITTEES

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

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

Dear Chairman Pai,

As you know, in July 2019, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a rule concerning *Transforming of the 2.5 GHz Band* (WT Docket No, 18-120; DA 18-647). Included in this rule is the establishment of a Tribal Priority window for new Educational Broadband Service (EBS) License issuance for Tribal Nations. We write today to urge the FCC to open the priority filing window for Tribes for 180 days for education and application purposes.

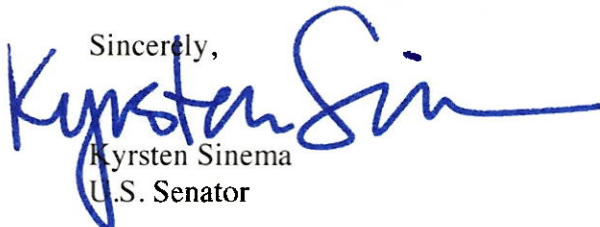
Access to broadband is critical for education in the 21st Century. The EBS program has helped foster programs that tackle the homework gap and digital divide by providing needed spectrum for broadband services. In urban areas, EBS licensees are providing much-needed broadband that supports educational uses such as Wi-Fi on school buses and portable hotspots for students without home internet access.

Yet, 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.

This rule provides tribes with the opportunity to expand rural broadband, accelerate 5G deployment, close the digital divide, and bridge the homework gap. As such, we respectfully urge the FCC to open the priority window for Tribes for 180 days for education and application purposes. We also urge the FCC's Office of Native Affairs and Policy (ONAP) to continue its work with Tribes on a government-to-government basis to provide additional details on this opportunity.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

  
Kyrsten Sinema  
U.S. Senator