



CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
JIMMY PATRONIS
STATE OF FLORIDA

October 19, 2018

Via Hand Delivery

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

Dear Chairman Pai:

I've been on the ground in the Panhandle and have witnessed the devastation caused by Hurricane Michael. Entire communities have been wiped off the map. As Florida's Chief Financial Officer and State Fire Marshal, and a life-long resident of the Panhandle, I am troubled by how catastrophic the failure of wireless communications have been in this storm. While Florida recovers and rebuilds, we would be remiss if this rebuilding process did not include fundamentally changing the way telecommunications companies prepare and respond to major disasters.

In 2017, there were 17 percent fewer wireline customers than in 2016. We have quickly become a wireless-only society, so it's incredibly important that carriers get disaster preparedness and resiliency right. Wireless communication has rapidly changed the way we connect with one another, and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) should ensure its rules keep on pace with the evolution of technology and how it can best serve the public.

After more than a week of wireless service failures in Hurricane Michael's hardest hit areas, I urge you to recommend industry-wide measures that would help prevent downed telecommunications for extended periods of time. FCC recommendations on best practices to pre-position equipment so companies are prepared to come in and make repairs quickly after a hurricane passes, for example, could ultimately save lives by getting communications back up to aid first responder search and rescue operations.

Additionally, FCC action to set industry-wide standards for carriers to open their roaming agreements after a disaster is declared would help expedite response efforts and make it easier for residents to call for help.

I know the Federal Communications Commission is laser-focused on ensuring consumers are at the forefront of their decision making and I believe a deep dive into these two areas would best serve telecommunications customers in future disasters. I previously served on the Public Service Commission (PSC) and understand how important it is to have a robust disaster plan. I welcome the opportunity to discuss these, and any other, options further with you. I look forward to working on solutions so that no community will have to endure what the Panhandle has experienced this past week.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jimmy Patronis".

Jimmy Patronis
Chief Financial Officer