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**For Immediate Release**

**CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF THE RURAL  
BROADBAND AUCTIONS TASK FORCE**

WASHINGTON, April 3, 2017—Today, FCC Chairman Ajit Pai announced the formation of the Rural Broadband Auctions Task Force to implement the upcoming Universal Service Fund-related auctions.

The Task Force will oversee both the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF-II) and Mobility Fund II (MF-II) auctions. The CAF-II auction will offer almost \$2 billion to bidders to connect unserved and underserved locations over the next decade. The MF-II auction will make available more than \$4.5 billion in new funding over ten years for expanding 4G LTE mobile coverage across rural America and in Tribal lands.

Chairman Pai named Chelsea Fallon as Director of the Task Force, with Michael Janson and Kirk Burgee as Deputy Directors. Thom Parisi will serve as the Chief of Staff of the Task Force. Senior leaders from across the agency will also serve on the Task Force, including representatives from the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, the Wireline Competition Bureau, the Office of Strategic Policy and Analysis, the Office of the Managing Director, and the Office of General Counsel.

Chairman Pai said, “I’m pleased that we continue to move forward aggressively to close the digital divide in the United States. The Task Force I announce today will help ensure that taxpayer funds are allocated efficiently for rural broadband deployment and that all Americans who want Internet access are able to get it.”

Chairman Pai added, “Commencing these auctions as soon as possible is a top priority for the Commission as we seek to close the digital divide. As with other proceedings, we believe we must engage with the public and be as transparent as possible throughout the duration of these two auctions, including identifying potential problems early on and fixing them ahead of time. I thank in advance Chelsea, Michael, Kirk, Thom, and all of the FCC staff involved in this effort for all of their hard work. I look forward to seeing their progress in the months ahead.”

Currently, Chelsea Fallon is Deputy Chief, Industry Analysis and Technology Division, Wireline Competition Bureau; Michael Janson is Assistant Bureau Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau; Kirk Burgee is Associate Bureau Chief and Chief of Staff, Wireline Competition Bureau; and Thom Parisi is Legal Advisor, Wireline Competition Bureau.

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*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*