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For Immediate Release

**CHAIRMAN PAI STATEMENT ON PROPOSAL TO HELP PROTECT
SECURITY OF U.S. COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS
AND THEIR SUPPLY CHAINS**

*Proposal Seeks to Bar Use of Universal Service Funds to Purchase Equipment or Services
from Companies that Pose National Security Risk*

WASHINGTON, March 26, 2018—Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai today shared with his fellow Commissioners a proposal to help address national security threats to U.S. communications networks and their supply chains. Specifically, the draft Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, if adopted, would propose to bar the use of money from the FCC’s Universal Service Fund to purchase equipment or services from companies that pose a national security threat to United States communications networks or the communications supply chain. Chairman Pai will call for a vote on this proposal at the Commission’s April 17 meeting. The following is a statement from Chairman Pai:

“Threats to national security posed by certain communications equipment providers are a matter of bipartisan concern. Hidden ‘back doors’ to our networks in routers, switches—and virtually any other type of telecommunications equipment—can provide an avenue for hostile governments to inject viruses, launch denial-of-service attacks, steal data, and more. Although the FCC alone can’t safeguard the integrity of our communications supply chain, we must and will play our part in a government- and industry-wide effort to protect the security of our networks.

“That’s why I’m proposing to prohibit the FCC’s \$8.5 billion Universal Service Fund from being used to purchase equipment or services from any company that poses a national security threat to the integrity of communications networks or their supply chains. The money in the Universal Service Fund comes from fees paid by the American people, and I believe that the FCC has the responsibility to ensure that this money is not spent on equipment or services that pose a threat to national security. On April 17, I hope that my fellow Commissioners will join me in supporting this important proposal to help protect our national security.”

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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).