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For Immediate Release

NEW DATA SHOWS DIGITAL DIVIDE IS CLOSING AND BROADBAND COMPETITION IS INCREASING

Substantial Progress Made From 2016 to 2018

WASHINGTON, February 20, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission’s Office of Economics and Analytics (OEA) today released updated data showing that the digital divide substantially narrowed during the first two years of Chairman Ajit Pai’s leadership of the FCC.

Specifically, from December 2016 to December 2018, the number of Americans without any options for at least 250/25 Mbps fixed terrestrial broadband service plummeted by 74%, from 181.7 million to 47 million. And during that same time period, the number of Americans with no options for at least 25/3 Mbps fixed terrestrial broadband service fell by 30%, from 26.1 million to 18.3 million.

The data also showed an increase in competition from December 2016 to December 2018, with the number of Americans enjoying more than two options for 25/3 Mbps fixed terrestrial broadband service increasing by 52%, from 45.9 million to 69.8 million. Moreover, the number of rural Americans with two or more options for 25/3 Mbps fixed terrestrial broadband service increased by 52%, from 14.4 million to 22 million.

“My top priority at the FCC is to expand broadband deployment and provide all Americans with digital opportunity, and the figures we are releasing today show once again that we are on the right track,” said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. “At that same time, however, our work is not done. That’s why we’ll continue our focus on eliminating regulatory barriers to broadband deployment and reforming our universal service funding programs, such as through the implementation of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund.”

The updated data includes fixed and mobile broadband deployment and speeds as of December 31, 2018. The data can be accessed from the Commission’s website at:
<https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/reports/consolidated-communications-marketplace-reports/consolidated-communications>.

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