

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Food Manufacturers Gratified by FCC Chairman’s Move to Expand Connectivity for Rural Americans**

The Midwest Food Products Association ([MWFPA](http://www.mwfpa.org)) expressed gratification at the news that Federal Communications (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai has proposed increasing options for fixed and mobile broadband deployments using vacant TV broadcast spectrum, commonly known as TV white spaces. Specifically, the proposal would increase the power level and antenna height for TV white spaces equipment in rural areas.

MWFPA President Jason Culotta said “Rural infrastructure investments, like expanding broadband internet access, could improve economic performance in addition to contributing to quality of life and job opportunities through more robust delivery of education, healthcare, public safety, and other services. We are gratified that Chairman Pai has decided to move ahead in improving the use of unlicensed spectrum to provide broadband service to rural areas.”

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According to Culotta, “Food manufacturers in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois employ many people in rural markets. However, global economic forces and technological advances have resulted in changes to manufacturing that have disproportionately affected rural areas in these states. This proposed rule is a substantial step toward providing real broadband access to their communities.”

Connect Americans Now, a coalition of more than 200 national and state-based organizations, rural advocates and concerned citizens which includes MWFPA, commended the chairman for his action saying this “can help to unleash the full potential of TV white space technology as a critical tool to help bridge the digital divide . . . ”

If the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is adopted on February 28, 2020 at the FCC’s monthly open meeting, the public will have the opportunity to provide feedback prior to the adoption of final rules.