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**For Immediate Release****Support Builds for FCC ‘Connected Care Pilot Program’  
*Doctors, Healthcare Associations, Rural Advocates, and Members of Congress Weigh in***

WASHINGTON, August 1, 2018—On Thursday, August 2, the Federal Communications Commission will vote on a [proposal](#) to establish a new \$100 million “Connected Care Pilot Program” to support telehealth for low-income Americans, especially those living in rural areas and veterans. Commissioner Brendan Carr has been leading the FCC’s efforts in this proceeding and [announced](#) the initiative earlier this month in an [op-ed](#) with Senator Roger Wicker.

“Advances in mobile technology and applications mean that Americans can now get high-quality healthcare delivered directly to them, regardless of where they are located,” said **Commissioner Carr**. “With this new pilot program, the FCC is looking to support this trend in telehealth and ensure that even more communities get a fair shot at next-generation telehealth opportunities. It has been great to see the wide range of stakeholders—including doctors, healthcare associations, organizations representing agricultural and rural communities, and members of Congress—that share this goal.”

**Dr. Karen Rheuban**, UVA Center for Telehealth, said, “We look forward to the advancement of the Pilot and encourage the Commission to align their efforts with those of the Veteran’s Health Administration and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services so as to transform care delivery models for patients with chronic illness.”

**Dr. David J. Houghton**, Medical Director of Ochsner Health System, said, “I believe, based on our own first-hand experience, [this program] will offer important examples and insights for all policymakers and healthcare providers about how we can improve access, quality and cost of care for patients.”

**American Telemedicine Association** [tweeted](#), “We’re proud to support this pilot program, which will help bridge the urban-rural healthcare gap. #TelehealthForward”

**American Hospital Association** [testified](#) to Congress, “We also are pleased that the FCC is considering whether to establish a new \$100 million Connected Care Pilot Program to support telehealth for low-income Americans, especially those living in rural areas and veterans.”

**Connected Health Initiative** President Morgan Reed [said](#), “This \$100 million program is a boon for the millions of Americans living without reliable access to healthcare and the American businesses driving effective, innovative telehealth solutions.”

**American Agri-Women** said, “Scarcity of providers, stigma, and the general lack of anonymity for farmers and ranchers to seek mental health support has made telemedicine a logical option for helping to deal with the crisis at hand. AAW is in support of new pilot programs to spread the availability of telemedicine to underserved rural areas.

**National Grange**, a rural advocacy group, issued a [statement](#) saying “Telehealth, and, especially, mobile health, services made possible with 5G represent the potential for rural communities to access a high-quality level of care that has never before been possible.”

**Senator Deb Fischer** [said](#), “I welcome the new telehealth initiative from the FCC. This program would increase Nebraskans’ access to connected health care services and life-saving technologies. Better telehealth connectivity will improve follow-up care and enhance doctors’ ability to monitor patients outside of the hospital.”

**Senator Todd Young** said, “The FCC’s proposed Connected Care Pilot Program is welcome news in Indiana. After visiting our state to see firsthand the potential benefits of telemedicine, I am grateful that Commission Carr is leading efforts to help bring healthcare to our rural and underserved communities in new and innovative ways. I look forward to continuing working with Commissioner Carr to develop programs that expand the use of telemedicine throughout Indiana and the entire country.”

**Senator Cory Gardner** said, “I appreciate the FCC’s commitment to expanding telehealth services in Colorado and across the country. The expansion of broadband for telehealth services is crucial to bridging the divide of health care access for Coloradans living in both rural and urban communities, and I’ll continue to work with Commissioner Carr and others at the FCC to make these improvements a priority moving forward.

**Senator Tina Smith** said: “Telehealth initiatives increase access to care, help providers work together, and lead to earlier intervention. I look forward to working with the Commission in its effort to invest more resources in telehealth. We need to preserve access for low income Americans and veterans to telecommunications services, and these new investments could help communities—especially in rural areas—eliminate barriers that prevent families in Minnesota and across the nation from getting the care they need.”

**Rep. Ryan Costello** said, “Thank you Commissioner Carr and the entire FCC community for your leadership in advancing telehealth and the myriad ways it benefits patients, families, and the healthcare community writ large. Connecting patients to their needed care, and integrating medical practice with more portable access to critical medical information, the FCC’s Connected Care Pilot Program is helping pave the way for improved health outcomes across America. This patient-centered vision enables digital innovation to help provide access to quality, more affordable healthcare.”

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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).*