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For Immediate Release**FCC SEEKS COMMENTS ON LAUNCHING
TELEHEALTH PILOT PROGRAM*****Highlights the Benefits of Broadband to Deliver ‘Connected Care Everywhere’***

WASHINGTON, August 2, 2018—The Federal Communications Commission today took steps to explore the creation of an experimental “Connected Care Pilot Program” to support the delivery of advanced telehealth services to low-income Americans.

The Commission’s top priority is bridging the digital divide, and nowhere is that more critical than in the area of health care. Today, whether it’s through remote patient monitoring or mobile health applications accessed via smartphones, tablets, or other devices, advances in broadband-enabled telehealth technologies are allowing patients to receive care wherever they are. These connected care services can lead to better health outcomes and significant cost savings for patients and health care providers alike. But many low-income consumers, particularly those living in rural areas, lack access to affordable broadband and might not be able to realize these benefits.

Through today’s Notice of Inquiry (NOI), the Commission seeks comment on creating a Universal Service Fund pilot program to promote the use of broadband-enabled telehealth services among low-income families and veterans, with a focus on services delivered directly to patients beyond the doors of brick-and-mortar health care facilities.

The NOI seeks comment on:

- The goals of, and statutory authority for, the pilot program.
- The design of the pilot program, including the budget; the application process and types of telehealth pilot projects that should be funded; eligibility criteria for participating health care providers, broadband service providers, and low-income consumers; the broadband services and other communications services and equipment that should be supported; the amount of support and how it should be disbursed; and the duration of the program.
- How to measure the effectiveness of pilot projects in achieving the goals of the program.

Today’s decision reflects the Commission’s continued commitment to supporting broadband connectivity for those facing barriers to high-quality health care and to maximizing the benefits of telehealth for all Americans through enhanced digital access.

Action by the Commission August 2, 2018 by Notice of Inquiry (FCC 18-112). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, Carr, and Rosenworcel approving and issuing separate statements.

WC Docket No. 18-213

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