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For Immediate Release**FCC TAKES STEPS TO ENFORCE QUALITY STANDARDS FOR
RURAL BROADBAND NETWORKS***Also Provides Additional Flexibility to Reduce Burden on Companies*

WASHINGTON, October 25, 2019—The Federal Communications Commission today approved performance testing procedures for carriers receiving Connect America Fund support to deploy fixed broadband networks to unserved Americans living in rural areas, helping to ensure that rural Americans have access to the same high-quality networks as Americans in urban areas.

The Commission's actions today also ensure that carriers remain accountable to consumers, taxpayers, and the Commission, and are delivering the network performance they have committed to provide. At the same time, the Commission gave carriers additional flexibility to minimize the burden of testing on them and their customers. This flexibility will enable carriers of all sizes and technical capabilities to meet testing requirements without unnecessary costs, while maintaining accountability.

The Connect America Fund provides support for broadband and voice service in rural areas where service would not be available or affordable absent support. Most Connect America Fund programs have specific build-out requirements and standards for speed and latency, and the testing procedures affirmed today would apply to all that have such requirements. Carriers that fail to meet performance standards and buildout requirements face a loss of support.

In response to Petitions for Reconsideration and Applications for Review of an earlier bureau-level Performance Measure Order, the FCC today maintained the existing requirement that carriers conduct quarterly speed and latency tests between specified numbers of active subscribers' homes and the Internet, and made targeted modifications to the testing procedures, including:

- Modifying the schedule for commencing testing by basing it on the deployment obligations specific to each Connect America Fund support mechanism;
- Implementing a new pre-testing period that will allow carriers to become familiar with testing procedures without facing a loss of support for failure to meet the requirements;
- Allowing greater flexibility to carriers in identifying which customer locations should be tested and selecting the endpoints for testing broadband connections.

Action by the Commission October 25, 2019 by Order on Reconsideration (FCC 19-104).
Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, Carr, Rosenworcel, and Starks approving and issuing
separate statements.

WC Docket No. 10-90

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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).*