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For Immediate Release

COMMISSIONER ROSENWORCEL CALLS ON FCC TO TAKE AGGRESSIVE ACTION TO ASSIST WITH CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE

WASHINGTON, March 12, 2020: Today, Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel called on the Federal Communications Commission to take aggressive action in response to COVID-19.

“The coronavirus is already exposing hard truths about the digital divide, but the Federal Communications Commission has the power to help. Nationwide this crisis means that we are going to explore the expansion of telework, telehealth, and tele-education.

The FCC should immediately convene the country’s broadband providers to discuss what they are doing right now to provide service for Americans. We need to explore how we can facilitate public-private partnerships and consumer education campaigns to expand the reach of connectivity as quickly as possible at little or no-cost to Americans who are impacted by the coronavirus. Where data caps are in place, we need to explore how those limitations can be eliminated. We also need to understand how broadband providers will keep workers safe and keep their services running for Americans who will increasingly rely on broadband connectivity for work, healthcare, and education.

At the same time, the FCC should get to work to harness its universal service powers to meet this challenge. The FCC should work with health care providers to ensure connectivity for telehealth services are available for hospitals, doctors, and nurses treating coronavirus patients and those who are quarantined. In addition, as classrooms move online, the FCC should identify how it can use its authority to provide wi-fi hotspots for loan for students whose schools have closed their doors.

We have an opportunity to confront this challenge head-on and we need to act with urgency.”

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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).