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For Immediate Release

**COMMISSIONER ROSENWORCEL ON UNIVERSAL SERVICE
GIFT RULES WAIVER**

WASHINGTON, March 18, 2020: Today, Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel issued the following statement regarding the announcement of the Federal Communications Commission’s waiver of the E-Rate program and the Rural Health Care program gift rules to assist with coronavirus response.

“Today’s waiver of the E-Rate and Rural Health Care gift rules is a smart step to assist in coronavirus response. As a result, schools and hospitals will be able to receive enhanced services and equipment from their service provider without running afoul of the Federal Communications Commission’s gift rules. But let’s not confuse generosity for justice, because we need a national plan to ensure that everyone is connected during these unprecedented days.

This should include using our universal service powers to provide hotspots for loan for students caught in the Homework Gap so that no child is offline. Teachers and school administrators are asking for this right now and we can help. It should also include working 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. We also need to do more so Americans can get online during this crisis at little or no cost. Where data caps and overage fees remain in place, they need to be lifted and eliminated.

This crisis demands urgent action. There’s more the FCC can do right now – and we should.”

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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).