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For Immediate Release

CHAIRMAN PAI WELCOMES SENATE PASSAGE OF THE CARES ACT AND \$200 MILLION BOOST FOR FCC TELEHEALTH EFFORTS

WASHINGTON, March 26, 2020—Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai released the following statement after the U.S. Senate passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which includes \$200 million for the agency to support telehealth and telemedicine services.

“At a time when many of our nation’s hospitals are facing unprecedented challenges because of the coronavirus pandemic, telemedicine has never been more important to our nation’s healthcare system and the many patients it needs to serve. That’s why I urged elected officials to provide funding for the FCC’s connected care efforts and why I want to thank the U.S. Senate for agreeing to that request in the CARES Act. The CARES Act would support this critical shift in healthcare delivery by giving the FCC the money and authority to quickly fund telehealth programs across the country—programs through which patients can be monitored and treated outside of a healthcare facility, receiving quality care while freeing up inpatient resources for sicker patients. The FCC has already begun preparing for this bill to become law, and I hope that the U.S. House of Representatives will quickly send this legislation to the President’s desk.

“But that’s not all. The FCC has already acted to promote telehealth solutions for the patients of rural hospitals and clinics by making an additional \$42 million immediately available through our Rural Health Care Program. The agency also waived so-called ‘gift rules’ so that participants in the Rural Health Care Program can solicit and accept improved connections or additional equipment for telemedicine. The FCC has a vital role to play in helping Americans connect with health care providers. Senate passage of the CARES Act and the proactive measures we’ve already taken are major steps forward in fulfilling that role.”

For updates on the FCC’s wide array of actions during the coronavirus pandemic, visit: <https://www.fcc.gov/coronavirus>. For more information on the FCC’s Keep Americans Connected Pledge, visit: <https://www.fcc.gov/keepamericansconnected>.

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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).