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For Immediate Release**FCC ACTS TO KEEP LOW-INCOME AMERICANS CONNECTED
DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC*****Agency Waives Lifeline Program De-Enrollment Requirements Until May 29***

WASHINGTON, March 30, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission today took action to help ensure that no current Lifeline subscribers are involuntarily removed from the Lifeline program during the coronavirus pandemic. Specifically, the FCC’s Wireline Competition Bureau waived several rules that could otherwise result in de-enrollment of subscribers from the Lifeline program, which provides monthly discounts on broadband and voice services to qualified low-income consumers.

“Our priority right now is keeping Americans connected to broadband and phone service when they need it most. These proactive measures will go a long way in minimizing the risk that a low-income consumer might lose service during the COVID-19 crisis,” said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. “Today’s waivers are especially important given that a Lifeline subscriber who is removed from the program may have difficulty re-enrolling at a time when Americans are being ordered to stay at home and engage in social distancing and many carriers’ retail stores are closed.”

The Commission’s de-enrollment rules are in place to remove duplicate, unused, and ineligible accounts and ensure that Lifeline program dollars are directed toward qualifying low-income consumers. Lifeline providers are required to de-enroll any subscriber who the carrier has a reasonable basis to believe is no longer eligible for the program. Today’s order finds that it is in the public interest to waive these requirements for a limited period of time to ensure that no current Lifeline subscriber loses service during this unprecedented, nationwide public health crisis.

The Bureau’s order waived the Lifeline program’s usage requirements and general de-enrollment procedures until May 29, 2020. It also extended a recent waiver of the program’s recertification and reverification requirements to May 29, 2020 to ensure that all of the waiver periods for the Lifeline de-enrollment rules will have the same duration. The order also directed the Lifeline program administrator, the Universal Service Administrative Company, to pause any involuntary de-enrollment of existing subscribers until that date. The Bureau will monitor the situation and determine whether any additional extension of these waivers and directives is needed.

For updates on the FCC’s wide array of actions to keep consumers connected during the coronavirus pandemic, visit: <https://www.fcc.gov/coronavirus>. For more information on

Chairman Pai'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).