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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC PROVIDES RELIEF THAT ENABLES RURAL BROADBAND AND  
PHONE PROVIDERS TO IMMEDIATELY  
WAIVE CONSUMER FEES**

***Hundreds of Rate-of-Return Carriers Will Waive Late Fees and  
DSL Installation and Cancellation Fees***

WASHINGTON, April 1, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission this week paved the way for hundreds of rural phone and broadband providers to waive fees that would otherwise be incurred by customers experiencing economic challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. These include late payment fees as well as installation and cancellation fees for consumers signing up for, or looking to switch providers of, Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) broadband services in order to work from home or access remote learning. The FCC’s Wireline Competition Bureau has approved waiver requests from the National Exchange Carrier Association (NECA) and John Staurulakis, Inc. (JSI) to allow the two organizations to quickly implement tariff changes to ensure that NECA and JSI participant companies have the flexibility to meet the [Keep Americans Connected](#) pledge during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We need to remove regulatory hurdles wherever we can to help consumers stay connected during this national emergency,” said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. “With these waivers of our tariffing rules, we’re doing exactly that. I’m glad to enable these rate-of-return carriers to waive late payment fees and allow consumers to purchase and cancel DSL service without having to pay installation and termination fees. We hope that this relief will help keep rural Americans connected during the coronavirus pandemic.”

The Bureau’s action allows the tariff revisions waiving late payment penalties, installation and early cancellation fees to go into effect today. For more information on the FCC’s efforts to keep Americans connected during the pandemic, visit: <https://www.fcc.gov/keep-americans-connected>

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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).*