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**For Immediate Release**

## **FCC AND CISA STRESS NEED FOR COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY ACCESS AND RESOURCES DURING PANDEMIC**

### ***Offer Recommendations to States to Help Keep Americans Connected***

WASHINGTON, May 26, 2020—Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Director Christopher Krebs today sent a letter to the nation’s governors encouraging them to provide necessary access and resources to the communications workers helping to keep Americans connected during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Communications networks are a lifeline during this challenging time, enabling the public to call 911 and participate in telehealth, distance learning, and telework,” said Chairman Pai. “To continue meeting these needs during the pandemic, workers in the communications industry must have the necessary access and resources. We urge state leaders, who are playing a critical role in protecting their communities, to consider the recommendations we are making today to ensure that communications networks and services remain available to the public and first responders.”

“As our nation continues to respond to COVID-19, our ability to maintain reliable and consistent communication is vital. We commend industry on making the investments to ensure the nation’s telecommunications infrastructure was ready for this moment and CISA is committed to ensuring the sector has the support and resources needed to continue operating. We also recognize the critical role state and local officials play in managing and executing COVID-19 response activities and will continue to help them identify essential services to safeguard the continuity of functions needed to protect their communities,” said Director Krebs. “We thank all of our essential critical infrastructure workers who have continued doing their jobs throughout the response.”

The letter includes these key points:

- Highlights recent guidance from CISA related to the essential critical infrastructure workforce and 911 centers during the pandemic
- Asks that certain communications industry entities and personnel be declared essential to the pandemic response and afforded all appropriate access and resources
- Asks that states consider prioritizing the distribution of personal protective equipment to communications personnel when available
- Underscores the role of various communications industry personnel to supporting consumers’ remote emergency communications needs

- Encourages industry and government to work together to prioritize and complete communications infrastructure and next generation 911 projects
- Calls on states to facilitate the maintenance, repair, and provisioning of communications infrastructure and services by providing online access to relevant government functions, such as the permitting process, where not already available electronically.

The letter is available at: <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-364566A1.pdf>.

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