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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC ACTING CHAIRWOMAN CIRCULATES EMERGENCY  
BROADBAND BENEFIT PROGRAM REPORT AND ORDER**

***Congress Tasked the FCC to Create the Rules for a Federally Funded Broadband  
Discount Program for Low-Income Households***

WASHINGTON, February 22, 2021—Today, Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel circulated a Report and Order that, if adopted, would establish the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program, a \$3.2 billion federal initiative to provide qualifying households discounts on their internet service bills and an opportunity to receive a discount on a computer or tablet.

“As we work our way through a pandemic that has upended so much in our day-to-day life, we have been asked to migrate so many of the things we do online. From work to healthcare to education, this crisis has made it clear that without an internet connection too many households are locked out of modern life. It’s more apparent than ever that broadband is no longer nice-to-have. It’s need-to-have,” **said Rosenworcel**. “But too many of us are struggling to afford this critical service. Late last year Congress directed the FCC to establish a new Emergency Broadband Benefit Program to assist families struggling to pay for internet service during the pandemic. Today I’m proud to advance a proposal to my colleagues to implement this program so we can help as many eligible households as possible. No one should have to choose between paying their internet bill or paying to put food on the table. With the help of the Emergency Broadband Benefit, we have a new way for households to access virtual learning, for patients to connect to telehealth providers, and for those struggling in this pandemic to learn new online skills and seek their next job.”

The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program was created by Congress in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021. Through the program, eligible households may receive a discount off the cost of broadband service (up to \$50.00 per month and, on Tribal lands, the monthly discount may be up to \$75.00 per month) and certain connected devices during an emergency period relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. Participating providers can be reimbursed for such discounts.

The proposed Emergency Broadband Benefit Program Report and Order:

- Opens the program to all types of broadband providers;
- Requires providers to deliver the qualifying broadband service to eligible households to receive reimbursement from the Program; and
- Encourages eligible households to affirmatively indicate their interest in the program.

Households are eligible when a member of the household:

- Qualifies for the FCC’s Lifeline program;

- Receives benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program;
- Experienced a substantial loss of income since February 29, 2020;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating providers' existing low-income or COVID-19 program.

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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).*