

**For Immediate Release**

### **Carr Applauds Legislation to Expand Access to Telehealth**

CANISTOTA, SD, May 3, 2021—Today, FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr applauded legislation introduced in the Senate that would make permanent telehealth flexibilities that were made available during the COVID-19 pandemic and expand coverage of telehealth services.

The Creating Opportunities Now for Necessary and Effective Care Technologies (CONNECT) for Health Act of 2021, introduced by Senators Thune, Schatz, Wicker, Cardin, Warner, and Hyde-Smith on behalf of a bipartisan group of 50 senators, would permanently remove geographic restrictions on telehealth services, permanently allow health centers and rural health clinics to provide telehealth services, allow for the waiver of telehealth restrictions during future public health emergencies, and require a study to learn more about how telehealth has been used during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Commissioner Carr has been leading the FCC’s efforts to develop telehealth initiatives, including the Connected Care Pilot Program, and issued the following statement:

“Three years ago, we identified a new trend in telehealth. With smartphones and other connected devices, Americans could access health care services right from their homes or anywhere they have an Internet connection. It was the health care equivalent of moving from Blockbuster to Netflix. Since that time, I have been working with FCC colleagues and stakeholders to support this new trend. Back then, we had no way of knowing that the COVID-19 pandemic would bring the benefits of telehealth services into such sharp focus. But as the pandemic hit, the FCC took immediate and sustained action to ensure that our rules did not frustrate delivery of these important services.

“I expect that the momentum for delivering care directly to patients outside the confines of brick-and-mortar facilities will continue to build well after this devastating pandemic ends. And as the reliance on telehealth technology continues to grow, it is critically important that these services are accessible regardless of the location of the patient, which is particularly important in rural areas. I applaud Senator Thune and his colleagues for advancing this important, bipartisan legislation that will permanently remove unnecessary red tape and permanently expand access to telehealth technology throughout the country.”

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