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For Immediate Release

**COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS
APPLAUDS UNANIMOUS ADOPTION OF
EMERGENCY CONNECTIVITY FUND ORDER**

WASHINGTON, May 10, 2021—Today, the Federal Communications Commission announced the unanimous adoption of the Order establishing the Emergency Connectivity Fund. Commissioner Starks issued the following statement:

“This essential \$7.17 billion investment in our children, society, and future leaders has the potential to change the lives of millions of children who need support to get the most out of school—especially those in low-income communities. The Emergency Connectivity Fund will also support the many Americans who rely on their local library for connectivity and access to educational resources. By leveraging the E-Rate program’s discount matrix, the framework we adopt today will prioritize our country’s highest-need schools and libraries.

“I also thank my colleagues for agreeing to changes to the draft Order that will allow the Commission to gather data that is critical to creating better policy. As I have consistently stated—from the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund to today’s Emergency Connectivity Fund—we must push for better, clearer data to drive sound policymaking. And so, when many schools were forced to go online-only in March 2020, many collected information about students who needed devices or connections. More than a year into the pandemic, many of those schools have refined their data-gathering techniques to get an even clearer picture of which students are still in need of devices and connectivity. By adding a few basic questions to the Emergency Connectivity Fund application, the Commission will gain insight about where the Homework Gap is and how wide the gap is. This information will help inform all of us, including policymakers.”

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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).