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May 5, 2021

289

Jessica Rosenworcel
Acting Chairwoman
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street NE
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel,

I write to you today to express my support for UC Davis Health's COVID-19 Telehealth Program application to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Funding from the FCC's Telehealth Program will allow UC Davis Health to continue its efforts to address digital disparities by making telehealth services more accessible to underserved communities throughout the pandemic.

I am particularly concerned about low-income, rural, and minority communities who have encountered more barriers to accessing telehealth services during COVID-19. Limited broadband access, less smartphone ownership, and lower digital literacy contribute to digital disparities that these vulnerable communities face, which are further compounded by health disparities that have existed long before the pandemic.

As a regional leader in telehealth, UC Davis Health serves a population of more than 6 million residents across a 65,000-square-mile area that includes Northern and Central California. This wide geographic region is largely rural and comprised of a large proportion of vulnerable communities. Since the early 1990s, UC Davis Health has pioneered telehealth in order to provide care throughout this expansive geographic area. It has developed expertise in innovating telehealth services, leading key initiatives such as the creation of the California Telehealth Network, and building on this foundation through programs like ACTIVATE, a public-private initiative to bring telehealth services to underserved rural residents in Central California.

COVID-19 has accelerated the adoption of telehealth across the country, but it has also widened the digital and health disparities of the most vulnerable communities in California that UC Davis Health serves. This FCC program will help cover costs related to making telehealth more accessible to underserved communities during COVID-19, and it will allow UC Davis Health to help ensure that the most vulnerable communities have access to the care they need. I urge your consideration of UC Davis Health's application.

Sincerely,



DORIS MATSUI
Member of Congress