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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC COMMISSIONER STARKS ANNOUNCES  
CONNECTING BLACK COMMUNITIES: FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL  
STRATEGIES FOR CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE**

**WASHINGTON, February 15, 2022** — On Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 11 a.m. ET, FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks will virtually host “Connecting Black Communities: Federal, State, and Local Strategies for Closing the Digital Divide.” This event will feature remarks and a subsequent panel to highlight the impact of the digital divide on Black communities and plans to promote and enroll households in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Additionally, panelists will discuss how households will benefit from the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program (BEAD) as well as additional state and local efforts to get families connected to and equipped with broadband, devices, and digital skills.

This upcoming event will convene federal leaders from the U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Department of Commerce, and the FCC; state leaders from New York and Wisconsin; and local leaders from the cities of Chicago, Illinois and Augusta, Georgia.

The event will be live streamed at [www.fcc.gov/live](http://www.fcc.gov/live).

**Moderator:**

- Dr. Fallon Wilson, Vice President of Policy, Multicultural Media, Telecom, & Internet Council

**Speakers:**

- Majority Whip Jim Clyburn, U.S. House of Representatives
- Secretary Gina Raimondo, U.S. Department of Commerce
- Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel, FCC
- Commissioner Brendan Carr, FCC
- Commissioner Nathan Simington, FCC

**Panelists:**

- Mandela Barnes, Lieutenant Governor, State of Wisconsin
- Brian Benjamin, Lieutenant Governor, State of New York
- Lori Lightfoot, Mayor, City of Chicago, Illinois
- Hardie Davis Jr., Mayor, City of Augusta, Georgia
- Scott Woods, Director of the Office of Minority Broadband Initiatives, NTIA

For additional information about the event, please contact Alisa Valentin from the Office of FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks at (202) 418-2500 or [Alisa.Valentin@fcc.gov](mailto:Alisa.Valentin@fcc.gov).

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**[www.fcc.gov/about/leadership/geoffrey-starks](http://www.fcc.gov/about/leadership/geoffrey-starks)**

*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).*