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For Immediate Release

CHAIRWOMAN ROSENWORCEL UPDATES PUBLIC ON EFFORTS TO SUPPORT PUERTO RICO IN THE AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE FIONA

WASHINGTON, September 20, 2022—Federal Communications Commission Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel issued the following statement as Hurricane Fiona brought catastrophic rain and damage to Puerto Rico, and provided updates on how the Commission is supporting disaster assessment and recovery efforts:

“It was five years ago that Hurricane Maria ravaged Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and now Puerto Rico confronts another storm with Hurricane Fiona,” said Chairwoman Rosenworcel. “In times of crises, staying connected takes on new urgency. I saw that firsthand during my visit to Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria, and now some of those same areas have been hit once more. The FCC is assessing the impact on communications services and infrastructure and issuing daily public reports to keep people informed. We will work closely with government partners and communications providers to support restoration efforts as families and residents all over the island begin to rebuild, once again.”

The FCC has been coordinating closely with FEMA, CISA and other government partners, including officials in Puerto Rico, as well as communications providers in preparation for the storm, now during its impact, and to support any restoration activities in its aftermath.

The FCC is helping facilitate communications recovery in Puerto Rico through the following efforts, among others:

- Establishing a website at <https://www.fcc.gov/fiona> prior to landfall as a centralized location for all FCC information related to Hurricane Fiona, including emergency communications tips in English and Spanish, communication status reports, and other content.
- Performing a baseline survey of spectrum usage in targeted areas, which will help federal agencies assess the post-landfall impact to broadcasters and public safety communications.
- In coordination with FEMA and other federal partners, activating our Disaster Information Reporting System for all of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- Publishing the first comprehensive assessment of Hurricane Fiona’s impact on communications networks in the affected areas and providing daily updates to both government partners and the public.
- Engaging in daily coordination with Federal, state, and local partners, as well as with industry (including broadcasters, wireless and wireline carriers, satellite operators, trade associations, and others) to encourage actions like those outlined in the Wireless Network Resiliency Cooperative Framework, mutual roaming, and the transport of necessary communications equipment to help fill communications gaps.

- Working with federal partners to promote coordination between the communications and power sectors, which is critical during recovery efforts.
- Extending regulatory deadlines for affected communications providers in Puerto Rico, including a regulatory fee payment deadline, and assessing the need for other regulatory assistance that may be helpful.

In addition to the above efforts, the FCC is deploying staff to the affected areas to perform post-landfall, on-site surveys of communications services and infrastructure as well as to assist with coordination and oversight of communications restoration.

The FCC will continue to monitor the developing situation in Puerto Rico and share information about its operations.

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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).