

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Establishing a 5G Fund for Rural America*; GN Docket No. 20-32

This week the United Nations General Assembly is gathering in New York. Just before this meeting got underway, I did something that the Federal Communications Commission has not done in years. I joined the United Nations Broadband Commission to discuss ideas to support universal access to high-speed communications. I believe that one of the best ideas is ensuring that the systems we develop for support are based on good data.

That is the reason we are talking today about the future of the 5G Fund for Rural America. For the first time in our history of supporting wireless networks through the universal service system, this agency has comprehensive data about where service is and is not all across the country.

Thanks to the work of our Broadband Data Task Force we have maps that are light years ahead of what we produced before. We standardized the propagation data that carriers must submit to us twice a year and created new ways for consumers, governments, and others to help verify the data when the maps do not reflect service on the ground. As a result, we now know that over 14 million homes and businesses nationwide do not have mobile 5G coverage today.

What this means is that as we develop the 5G Fund and build the successor to our existing universal service program supporting wireless networks in rural America, known as the Mobility Fund, we will be able to incorporate this detailed picture of where service is and is not. We will be able to see gaps in coverage and ensure support actually reaches the communities that need it most.

On top of these data improvements, a lot has changed since the FCC first announced the 5G Fund, including a global pandemic that underscored the importance of access to high-speed mobile services. So we seek comment on updating the 5G Fund proposal in several ways.

First, we look at how best to support 5G service, so that we can address areas without service and we aren't short-changing rural communities covered by the last generation of wireless technology.

Second, we are revisiting the budget so that we can better account for the state of the supply chain and current costs associated with deploying 5G networks.

Finally, we seek comment on how best to leverage our new maps to target the first phase of funding to places where it is needed most—where people live, work and travel.

These are important questions. I look forward to the record that develops. I look forward to combining what we learn from commenters with the information we have from our maps. And I hope that if I get the opportunity to return to the United Nations Broadband Commission I can share what we have done to support universal wireless access—powered by good data.

I would like to thank the team behind this effort to build a better 5G Fund: Valerie Barrish, Craig Bomberger, Emily Burke, Chelsea Fallon, Jill Goldberger, Evan Kwerel, Paul Lafontaine, Mary Lovejoy, Kenneth Lynch, Giulia McHenry, Gary Michaels, Mark Montano, Murtaza Nasafi, Jeffrey Ocker, Kelly Quinn, Steve Rosenberg, Alexander Simmons, and Martha Stancill from the Office of Economics and Analytics; Rebekah Douglas, Jesse Jachman, Dangkhua Nguyen, and Suzanne Yelen from the Wireline Competition Bureau; Barbara Esbin, Garnet Hanly, William Holloway, Susannah Larson, John Lockwood, Jennifer Salhus, and Thuy Tran from the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau; Michael Janson, Douglas Klein, and Keith McCrickard from the Office of General Counsel; and Chana Wilkerson from the Office of Communications Business Opportunities.