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For Immediate Release**AS FUNDING FOR THE AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM ENDS,
COMMISSIONER STARKS URGES CONGRESS TO ACT**

WASHINGTON, May 31, 2024—FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks today released the following statement on the lapse in Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) funding:

“Today, the bipartisan Affordable Connectivity Program expires. This will cause real harm to millions of Americans. ACP is the most effective program we have ever had in closing the digital divide. Over 23 million households enrolled in ACP, realizing the benefits of affordable, high-speed broadband. And now we are leaving them behind.

Let’s put that 23 million in context. That’s one in six households in the country. Millions of veterans, seniors, families of color, and households with children. Americans living on Tribal lands, urban areas, and rural areas – where ACP outperformed enrollment expectations.

I’ve had the honor of meeting these Americans as I’ve travelled the country in support of ACP. With the program ending, I think of Ron, a veteran in Illinois, who relied on ACP to afford the broadband connection he used to contact the VA online to check the status of his mediations and set his healthcare appointments. And Denise, the mother of four in Chicago who said ACP has kept her children from falling behind on their online coursework at school. And I’ll never forget Debra, who asked me if she was going to have to eat less food if ACP goes away because she still needs the Internet.

Not only does the end of ACP impact these individual Americans, it also has significant consequences for our nationwide broadband infrastructure deployment efforts. ACP works hand in glove with the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program, reducing the subsidy necessary to support ISP network deployment. Losing ACP means that we will be handcuffing the \$42.5 billion working to build new networks that will reach primarily rural communities.

There is bipartisan legislation pending in Congress to re-fund ACP, a vital and life-changing program for Americans everywhere. The time to act is now. Broadband is at the center of modern, everyday life – it powers our work, education, finance, healthcare, communication, entertainment, and more. Connecting Americans, including the millions who struggle to afford broadband, is essential for both their future and the future of the country.”

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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).