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**For Immediate Release**

**January 27, 2026**

**GOMEZ ON FCC PLAN TO RAISE PHONE AND INTERNET BILLS**  
*FCC Proposal Would Add Barriers to Federal Support that Helps More Than 8 Million Vulnerable Families Stay Connected*

WASHINGTON — FCC Commissioner Anna M. Gomez issued the following statement after the FCC proposed changes to the Lifeline program that could cause eligible households to lose critical federal support, increasing phone and internet bills for families who stand to lose up to \$9.25 per month, and as much as \$34.25 per month on Tribal lands.

“At a time when millions of families are already struggling with the rising cost of living and the loss of the Affordable Connectivity Program, the FCC should be focused on making connectivity more affordable, not erecting new barriers that risk raising phone and internet bills for the people who can least afford it. While I support efforts to protect the integrity and success of the Lifeline program, this proposal goes well beyond that goal. By proposing to use the same cruel and punitive eligibility standards recently imposed for [Medicaid coverage](#), the Commission risks excluding large numbers of eligible households, including seniors, people with disabilities, rural residents, and Tribal communities, from a proven lifeline that millions rely on to stay connected to work, school, health care, and emergency services.

“These proposed changes are especially shortsighted in the aftermath of the lapse of the Affordable Connectivity Program, when affordability remains one of the most significant barriers to closing the digital divide. Instead of pursuing policies that could leave millions without support, we should be working together on bipartisan solutions that strengthen oversight while preserving access for those who rely on this program.

“Connectivity should be treated as an essential service and not be used as a political tool. As the FCC moves forward with this proposal, my focus will continue to be on ensuring that our policies expand opportunity, lower costs, and keep families connected.”

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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).*