

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90

We have a catastrophe in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. More than two weeks after Hurricane Maria made landfall, food and water remain in short supply. Progress restoring basic communications and power systems that were decimated by the storm's noxious mix of wind and rain has been painfully slow.

This is shameful. These are American citizens—who right now lack the ability to make a simple phone call, keep the lights on, or receive basic medical care. These are difficulties most of us would find unimaginable. Were they to happen to us, we would want our fellow citizens to make it a priority to assist with restoring essential infrastructure and study how to prevent this damage from ever happening again.

For this reason, I support this order, which takes a small step to jumpstart recovery by accelerating the availability of universal service funds for the restoration and repair of communications networks. This is the right thing to do.

But, let's not kid ourselves, this is not enough. The road to recovery is long. That is why I have called on this Commission to commit to both hold hearings as soon as feasible and issue a full report on this hurricane season and its impact on communications. The Commission took similar action following Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Sandy. It boggles my mind that we cannot commit to the same course here. We owe this not only to the people who have been impacted by this season's storms but to every one of us so we are better prepared for the next time that extreme weather puts our networks to the test. Because one thing is for sure—Mother Nature's wrath is sure to visit us again.