

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Wireless Emergency Alerts*, PS Docket No. 15-91; *Amendments to Part 11 of the Commission's Rules Regarding the Emergency Alert System*, PS Docket No. 15-94.

Today's *Order on Reconsideration* reaffirms the Commission's timeframe for supporting basic geo-targeting for Wireless Emergency Alerts. It also reaffirms the timeframe for the five largest mobile service providers to provide embedded references, but allows smaller, regional operators additional time to come into compliance with that requirement.

While I support this effort to update the WEA system, recent events demonstrate the need to move with greater dispatch. The very steps we address here could have saved life and property as wildfires made their way through Northern California and hurricanes made landfall in Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico. As Senator Harris and Senator Feinstein have noted, "emergency services in Northern California were not able to transmit lifesaving WEA messages, because of significant technical deficiencies in the WEA system." Those deficiencies include a lack of precise geo-targeting. And before Hurricane Harvey even hit Houston, Harris County public safety officials warned that WEA cannot be used to order evacuation for a hurricane, "because it is not able to target geographic areas accurately enough to make sure that distinct emergency instructions are being received by geographically adjacent groups."

We shouldn't be caught short like this again. Last year, the Commission proposed additional steps to improve the WEA system—including more granular geo-targeting, preservation of WEA messages, multilingual WEA messages, inclusion of multimedia, and the addition of two-way capabilities. We should address every one of these outstanding issues now—before the next disaster compels us to do so.