

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Misuse of Internet Protocol (IP) Captioned Telephone Service*, CG Docket No. 13-24;
Telecommunications Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities, CG Docket No. 03-123

Tucked in a corner of northeast Washington is a small coffee outpost of a national chain. It's quiet inside. You could hear a pin drop. But it's also revolutionary. That's because it is the first signing coffee store designed for and staffed by those who are deaf and hard of hearing. And it's bustling. I know. I spent time there earlier this week with advocates for the deaf and hard of hearing. Sitting together, with tall, steaming cups between us, we discussed the promise of new technologies, the power of inclusive policies, and the economic possibilities of bringing the hard of hearing deeper into the mainstream of American life.

The National Institutes of Health reports that over 37 million adults have some trouble hearing. They are your friends, your relatives, and your neighbors. An increasing number are veterans who were exposed to explosives during their service. I suspect every one of them would marvel at the coffee shop I visited. But more importantly, they would benefit from technologies like the one we take steps to improve today. IP Captioned Telephone Service is a form of telecommunications relay service that makes it possible for individuals with hearing loss to read captions and use any residual hearing to understand a telephone conversation. I am hopeful that our decision today will improve program management, and that our rulemaking will simplify emergency calling for those who use this service in the future. But above all, I want to see this service—and so many others used by those with disabilities—improved as time and technology advances. Because we need the fuller participation of those with disabilities in our coffee shops, our communities, and our country.

Today's effort has my full support.