

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

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

Today, we eliminate the universal service “rate floor.” I support this outcome, because it will blunt the impact of a sudden price increase for voice service in rural communities.

But for a moment, let me leave aside the rate floor and discuss the ceiling that has been proposed for universal service. Before this agency is a rulemaking that would cap all our universal service efforts. It flies in the face of this agency’s high-minded rhetoric about bridging the digital divide. That’s because it threatens to cut off broadband in rural areas, limit-high speed internet access in rural classrooms, shorten the reach of telehealth, and foreclose opportunity for those who need it most. It proposes unleashing a fight for support between connecting kids in schools and hooking up hospitals for telemedicine. I hope that this agency changes course. We have a statutory duty to support universal service. That is why we take this action on the rate floor today, and it is why the ceiling that has been proposed is unacceptable.