

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Modernizing the E-Rate Program for Schools and Libraries*, WC Docket No. 13-184, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

The E-Rate program is a cherished part of our universal service system. That's for good reason. Thanks to E-Rate, schools and libraries in communities in every state across the country are connected to the internet. In fact, E-Rate is the nation's largest educational technology program.

But just a few years ago, E-Rate was stuck in the dial-up era. So, at my urging, this agency embarked on a process to bring E-Rate up to speed for the digital age. Call it E-Rate 2.0. This new iteration of the program has produced extraordinary results. Tens of millions of more students now have the broadband and internet access they need in their classrooms. Libraries have seen dramatic increases in support. Rural schools and libraries have been among the most prominent beneficiaries. These results are by and large due to changes that put a new premium on fostering Wi-Fi access through the "category two" funding that is the subject of this rulemaking.

In this rulemaking, the agency seeks to sustain and extend the impact of these Wi-Fi policies for future generations of students and library patrons. Specifically, we seek comment on how to continue the category two funding approach adopted in earlier reforms. We also seek comment on changes to improve program flexibility and administration. This includes asking about how schools and libraries may budget for Wi-Fi at the school district or library system level instead of on a site-by-site basis. This is a worthy rulemaking and it has my support. I look forward to the record that develops and the steps this agency takes to ensure that E-Rate 2.0 continues to thrive.