

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL O'RIELLY**

Re: *Promoting Telehealth for Low-Income Consumers*, WC Docket No. 18-213, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

This item continues the process of asking important questions related to the establishment of a Connected Care pilot program, and Commissioner Carr deserves credit for his dedication in pursuing this initiative.

Nonetheless, as we take further steps in establishing this program, we need to be mindful of several principles that I previously outlined at the NOI stage, and will not reiterate here. Further, it does seem important to acknowledge the use of general USF funding to pay for the pilot. This NPRM does not propose to include the pilot within any one of the four USF programs or to fund it under their budgets. However, \$100 million in funding must come from somewhere, and that source is USF ratepayers, who will inevitably see their contributions burden rise as a result.

I appreciate Commissioner Carr's hard work on this item and look forward to more in-depth discussions about the points I previously raised and creation of the pilot in the context of the larger USF.