

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Affordable Connectivity Program*, WC Docket No. 21-450, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (June 8, 2022).

There are now more than 12 million households nationwide that subscribe to the Affordable Connectivity Program. This Commission established the program—and it’s a big deal. It’s the largest-ever broadband affordability program in the United States.

Last week, I visited San Antonio to learn from those with boots on the ground—in this case, cowboy boots—spreading the word about how this program can help families get online and stay online. From Representative Joaquin Castro I learned that before the pandemic one in four households in the city had no internet access at home. It’s a statistic the city is eager to change and there are amazing local efforts to do so through the San Antonio Housing Authority, San Antonio Public Library, and City of San Antonio Office of Innovation. Speaking with these folks was like attending a masterclass in community organizing and digital equity.

One thing I took away from this trip is that data matters. The city has done a lot of work to quantify the state of internet service within its borders. It has made use of the local zip code data we produce about subscribers to the Affordable Connectivity Program. And the people I spoke with impressed upon me that more data would be even better because it will help inform their efforts to reach everyone in the city—block by block, building by building.

The good news is that more data is coming. That’s because this rulemaking is an effort to standardize the way we collect data about the Affordable Connectivity Program. This is a terrific idea. It’s also required under the law. Section 60502(c) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act specifically directs us to establish rules for the collection of data “relating to the price and subscription rates of each internet service offering of a participating provider under the Affordable Connectivity Program.” That is what we kick off here and I look forward to the record that develops. More than that, I look forward to increasing the data we have regarding this program and the creative ways it can support digital equity efforts San Antonio and in communities nationwide.