

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Resilient Networks*, PS Docket No. 21-346; *Amendments to Part 4 of the Commission's Rules Concerning Disruptions to Communications*, PS Docket No. 15-80; *New Part 4 of the Commission's Rules Concerning Disruptions to Communications*, ET Docket No. 04-35 (June 27, 2022)

Last Fall, I had the opportunity to see firsthand the devastation wrought by Hurricane Ida. I went to Louisiana with Commissioner Carr and we traveled from Baton Rouge to New Orleans to survey the damage to communications and speak to people in the communities affected by the storm. We drove on long, flat roads by mangled store signs and piles of refuse waiting to be cleared away. But what stays with me most were the stories. Everyone we met wanted us to know what happened and know that they love where they live. They were deeply committed to the restoration of the communities. They were also invested in making sure that when the next storm comes they are better prepared.

We share that conviction at the Federal Communications Commission. This effort is a reflection of that. It is also a testament to what we learned on that trip—from public safety leaders in Baton Rouge, 911 call center operators in Livingston, broadband companies in LaPlace, and FirstNet officials in Raceland.

Today's action takes several important first steps to improve the resiliency of our wireless networks. First, it expands the times and places where carriers will be able to roam on each other's networks during an emergency, improving the likelihood that people will be able to stay connected when the unthinkable happens. Second, it takes what has to this point has been a voluntary Wireless Network Resiliency Cooperative Framework, which promotes service continuity through coordination, assistance, and information sharing during and after emergencies and disasters, and makes it mandatory for all mobile network operators. We've seen that the mutual aid and other provisions of this Framework can be effective at speeding recovery and ensuring responders have all the information they need, and it's time that these practices be implemented on an industry-wide basis. Third, it changes the circumstances that can trigger the initiation of the Framework, meaning that the Framework's activation will be more predictable, consistent, and responsive to needs on the ground.

Taken together, these changes will help restore service faster, help speed response coordination, and keep more people connected in disaster. But we can't stop here. In the rulemaking we adopted last year, we looked at several other ways our disaster response playbook could be updated. We considered if the Framework could usefully be expanded. We sought comment on where there are gaps that need to be filled in in our Disaster Information Reporting System. We also renewed our inquiry into back up power for communications facilities as well as the essential intersection between modern communications and the electrical grid. We will continue to assess the record and work on these issues.

We need to because network resiliency is so essential. Last Fall it was a hurricane in the Gulf, but we have also seen flooding in the Southwest, and wildfires out West. One thing we know for sure is that Mother Nature's wrath will visit us again and again. So we will have to continue to update our policies regarding network resiliency so that communications are available when we need them most.

Thank you to my colleagues for their partnership on this effort and their willingness to continue to engage on these matters.