

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER ANNA M. GOMEZ**

Re: *Wireless Emergency Alerts*, PS Docket No. 15-91; *Amendments to Part 11 of the Commission's Rules Regarding the Emergency Alert System*, PS Docket No. 15-94, Third Report and Order (October 19, 2023)

When a community faces a natural disaster or an emergency, having accurate information can make the difference between life and death. Today, we take significant steps to ensure that more people are able to receive life-saving emergency information in the language and format they understand.

Today, we vote to require that Wireless Emergency Alerts, or WEAs, are able to reach consumers in 13 languages and American Sign Language (ASL), in addition to English. By adopting this report and order, consumers will now be able to receive alerts in Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Arabic, French, Korean, Russian, Haitian Creole, German, Hindi, Portuguese, Italian, and ASL. Additionally, this action by the Commission requires a map of the general emergency area to be made available to consumers, makes it easier for alerting authorities to be able to test WEA performance in their communities, and creates a WEA Database where information is easily accessible to the public.

These are good steps to help communities have the information they need to stay safe during an emergency. As we see an increase in natural disasters – wildfires, floods, and hurricanes – devastate entire communities that are not used to them, expanding access to life-saving information is becoming more and more important. This is especially true for communities with limited resources that are doubly harmed by a dearth of information.

I also want to thank the Office of the Chairwoman for accepting our edits to this item to highlight the importance of outreach to consumers. One critical step to be able to receive a multilingual WEA is to set your phone in your preferred language so that you can receive the alert in that language. With our edits, we are encouraging all stakeholders to help raise awareness about this critical step, and ask the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau to seek public comment about how to best conduct outreach to consumers regarding multilingual alerts. So please, to all communities tuning in – tell us how we can make information about multilingual WEA most accessible to you.

And in the spirit of outreach to consumers on this important item, please see separately my Statement in Spanish.