

**STATEMENT OF  
CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Inquiry Concerning the Deployment of Advanced Telecommunications Capability to All Americans in a Reasonable and Timely Fashion*, GN Docket No. 22-270, 2024 Section 706 Report (March 14, 2024)

In the United States, we dream big and do audacious things. We connected the coasts with railways. We crisscrossed this country with interstate highways. We did these things because they strengthened our communities, our economy, and our national security. Today we are engaged in the same kind of history-making because we are building high-speed broadband to everyone, everywhere in this country.

We have committed to this course—at the Federal Communications Commission, with our colleagues at other agencies, and with Congress—because we know that all of us need access to broadband to have a fair shot at 21<sup>st</sup> century success.

Nothing made this apparent like the pandemic. After all, it was just four years ago this week that so many of us were told to head home. Life moved online—school, work, healthcare, and so much more. But not all of us were able to make this digital leap. Not everyone had access to reliable broadband. The pandemic exposed our digital divide in living color.

That is why we are now in the bold business of fixing this divide. That is why today the Commission updates its standard for broadband, our baseline, to 100 Megabits down and 20 Megabits up from 25 Megabits down and 3 Megabits up. This fix is overdue. It aligns us with pandemic legislation like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the work of our colleagues at other agencies. It also helps us better identify the extent to which low-income neighborhoods and rural communities are underserved. And because doing big things is in our DNA, we also adopt a long-term goal of 1 Gigabit down and 500 Megabits up.

One more thing. The law requires that we assess how reasonable and timely the deployment of broadband is in this country. So we do something in this report that is simple. We are honest. Our goal is to connect everyone, everywhere to high-speed broadband. But the last fully vetted and validated annual data before this agency show conclusively that we are not there yet. Nearly 24 million are not connected, including 28% of Americans living in rural areas and more than 23% of people on Tribal lands. That means millions of people still do not have the broadband they need to fully participate in modern life. We are working on it. That is why we have revamped our broadband mapping at this agency. It is why we are refining our universal service programs. It is why our colleagues at other agencies have been given unprecedented billions from Congress to help build broadband infrastructure to places that are still without.

Don't bet against us. Because we are making progress. So many providers are building and so many communities are planning their digital futures. Big things are ahead.

Thank you to the staff across the agency for their work on this report, including Allison Baker, Michele Berlove, Brad Berry, Bryan Boyle, David Brodian, Ted Burmeister, Jessica Campbell, Adam Copeland, Lisa Edwards, CJ Ferraro, Janice Gorin, Joel Graham, Jodie Griffin, Audra Hale-Maddox, Heather Hendrickson, Clint Highfill, Jesse Jachman, Alex Johns, Julia Johnson, Jamile Kadre, Melissa Kinkel, Ed Krachmer, Heidi Lankau, Chris Laughlin, Jodie May, Ben Nashed, Khoa Nguyen, Kimia Nikseresht, Nick Page, Jordan Reth, Johnnay Schrieber, Christi Shewman, Gilbert Smith, Simon Solemani, Noah Stein, Renae Stong, Raphael Sznajder, Jennifer Vickers, George Weber, Eric Wu, and Suzanne Yelen from the Wireline Competition Bureau; Johannes Bauer, Nicholas Copeland, Judith Dempsey, Chelsea Fallon, Lonnie Hofmann, Steven Kauffman, Evan Kwerel, Ken Lynch, Catherine Matraves, Jeffrey Ocker, Steven Rosenberg, Michelle Schaefer, Molly Schwarz, Alexander Simmons, Donald Stockdale, and Patrick Sun from the Office of Economics and Analytics; Barbara Esbin, Garnet Hanly, Jean Kiddoo, Susannah Larson, Susan Mort, Paul Powell, Jessica Quinley, Sayuri Rajapakse, Sean

Spivey, and Matt Warner from the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau; Scott Mackoul and Kerry Murray from the Space Bureau; Eduard Bartholme, Zac Champ, Bambi Kraus, Wes Platt, and Cara Voth from the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau; Ben Bartolme, Doug Klein, Irene Ly, Rick Mallen, Erika Olsen, Karen Onyeije, Brayden Parker, Robert Primosch, Anjali Singh, Sheryl Wilkerson, Derek Yeo, and Chin Yoo from the Office of General Counsel; and Joy Ragsdale from the Office of Communications Business Opportunities.