

Media Contact:

Kate Black 202-418-2400

Kate.Black@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release

**COMMISSIONER ROSENWORCEL ON BROADBAND COMPANIES' PLEDGE TO
KEEP AMERICANS CONNECTED:
THIS IS A GOOD START, BUT WE NEED TO DO MORE**

WASHINGTON, March 13, 2020: Today, Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel issued the following statement regarding certain companies' pledge to open up public wi-fi networks, waive late fees, and refrain from disconnecting consumers for the next 60 days.

"The coronavirus demands swift and decisive action. We know that more Americans than ever before will need internet access for work, education, and healthcare. We also know that this crisis will expose hard truths about the scope for the digital divide. That is why today's pledge by a number of broadband providers is a welcome first step. But we will need to do more to keep the country connected. Here are three things that the FCC can do next:

First, we need to get to work to connect schoolchildren. Schools are closing and so many students are being told that their classes are migrating online. We can use our universal service powers to provide hotspots for loan for students whose school doors have closed. We need to act immediately so that no child is offline.

Second, we need to get to work on connecting hospitals and patients just as the FCC did in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. The FCC should work with health care providers to ensure connectivity for telehealth services are available for hospitals, doctors, and nurses treating coronavirus patients and those who are quarantined.

Third, we need to expand these pledges and make adjustments to FCC programs so that even more Americans can get online during this crisis at little or no cost. Where data caps and overage fees are in place, they need to be lifted and eliminated.

But above all, we must act with urgency and use every tool at our disposal during this crisis."

Office of Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel: (202) 418-2400

Twitter: @JRosenworcel

www.fcc.gov/leadership/jessica-rosenworcel

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).