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For Immediate Release

**FCC ACTING CHAIRWOMAN CIRCULATES ROUND 2 COVID-19
TELEHEALTH PROGRAM REPORT AND ORDER**

***Congress Tasked the FCC to Create Rules and Procedures for Round 2 of Program
to Support Health Care Providers During the Pandemic***

WASHINGTON, March 17, 2021—Today, Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel circulated a Report and Order and Order on Reconsideration that, if adopted, would establish Round 2 of the COVID-19 Telehealth Program, a \$249.95 million dollar federal initiative that builds on the \$200 million program established as part of the CARES Act. The FCC’s COVID-19 Telehealth Program supports the efforts of health care providers to continue serving their patients by providing telecommunications services, information services, and devices necessary to enable the provision of telehealth services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This month marks one year since Americans’ lives were turned upside down as we all began to feel the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This crisis has presented extraordinary new challenges and opportunities for patients and providers throughout the country. From patients struggling to remotely connect with a health care professional to manage their chronic conditions, to doctors having to rethink their patient care models, health care providers have had to innovate at a rapid pace. But if the past year has shown us anything, it’s that telehealth technology is here to stay and can be a solution to help address inequities in access to health care services,” **said Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel**. “Late last year, Congress provided an additional \$249.95 million to support the FCC’s COVID-19 Telehealth Program. Today I’m proud to advance a proposal to my colleagues to further build on last year’s COVID-19 Telehealth program to support even more doctors and nurses in every corner of our country. Through the COVID-19 Telehealth Program, we can continue to make an impact on the health and well-being of all Americans.”

The Commission fully committed the \$200 million appropriated as part of the CARES Act by issuing awards for 539 applications during Round 1 of funding from April 16, 2020 through July 8, 2020. In December 2020, Congress appropriated an additional \$249.95 million for the Program as part of the 2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act. In January 2021, the FCC’s Wireline Competition Bureau sought public input on metrics to use when evaluating Round 2 applications, methods to ensure the equitable distribution of these additional funds, and improvements to the application process for Round 2 of the program.

The proposed Round 2 COVID-19 Telehealth Program Report and Order:

- Establishes a system for rating applications, factoring in the hardest hit and lowest-income areas, Tribal communities, health care provider shortage areas, unfunded Round 1 applicants, and more;
- Ensures equitable nationwide distribution of funding so that each state, territory, and the District of Columbia will receive funding since the program’s inception;

- Sets an application deadline to allow for a comprehensive review of all applications in one round, as opposed to the rolling approval system used in Round 1 of the Program;
- Awards funding in two phases in order to satisfy the statutory requirement that applicants be given an opportunity to provide additional information if the application will initially be denied, and to award funding as soon as possible.

To learn more about the FCC's COVID-19 Telehealth Program, visit <https://www.fcc.gov/covid19telehealth>.

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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).