

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90; *ETC Annual Reports and Certifications*, WC Docket No. 14-58; *Establishing Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers*, WC Docket No. 07-135; *Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime*, CC Docket No. 01-92.

Providing broadband to the most remote and rural areas of this country is not for the faint of heart. Consumers and businesses can be spread few and far between. Terrain can be rough and the deployment season can be brutally short. The economics are hard and the business case is not always easy. But it is a fact that we are stronger when we are connected to one another. Building on this simple principle, eight years ago the Federal Communications Commission set out to modernize its universal service program. It created the Connect America Fund—a new way to support both phone and broadband service in remote and rural communities.

Among other things, this effort included a new method for small carriers serving rural communities to secure support through a model-based system. Today, the FCC updates the support offered to those carriers dependent on this system. It also provides a new model-based offer for carriers that rely on the legacy support system that predates our Connect America Fund reforms. It updates the agency's budget for universal service policy as well as broadband deployment obligations for some carriers. Finally, it asks about additional changes that may need to be made to universal service support systems to ensure it is updated for future broadband demand. This is a smart collection of updates to a cherished program built on the sound principle of connecting us all. It has my full support.