

June 25, 2021

President Joseph R Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

On behalf of our almost 8 million members, we urge you to quickly appoint Acting Chair Jessica Rosenworcel to permanent Chair of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and fill the remaining Democratic commissioner seat with a nominee who has a deep commitment to workers in the telecommunications industry and who understands broadband issues important to workers, students, families, and consumers. The FCC is an essential independent regulatory agency to help achieve universal broadband access and the vacant Democratic commissioner seat prevents the Commission from taking meaningful action to build back better.

Since her appointment in January 2021, Acting Chair Rosenworcel has moved quickly and effectively to help consumers during the pandemic and close the digital divide.

Following direction from Congress, in May the FCC under Acting Chair Rosenworcel launched the \$3.2 billion Emergency Broadband Benefit Program (EBB) to provide Internet access to low-income households during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program reimburses eligible carriers \$50 per month (\$75 per month on Tribal lands) to provide discounted broadband service and \$100 per eligible household reimbursement for a connected device. In the first week of the program, over one million households enrolled in the program, demonstrating the vast need it addresses. Over 900 providers are participating in the program and enrollments include households in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa thanks in large part to Acting Chair Rosenworcel's effective outreach. More work remains to be done, but the EBB is a critical step to address the affordability of broadband, helping to connect people across the country, especially as the pandemic has widened the digital divide.

In addition, Acting Chair Rosenworcel used her tenure to shepherd through the Emergency Connectivity Fund, addressing one of the most pressing issues impacting students throughout the pandemic – digital connectivity. The COVID quarantine exposed the inequities faced by students throughout this country to be able to have equal access to a public education. This \$7.5 billion fund will ensure that students have access to a quality education regardless of their zip code.

Acting Chair Rosenworcel has also demonstrated her ability to find common ground with her colleagues to enact important policy at the FCC. In her tenure as Acting Chair, she presided over four meetings and 20 unanimous votes, including on preliminary 3.45 GHz auction rules,

rules for a second round of pandemic telehealth program, modified orbits for thousands of planned SpaceX satellites, in addition to establishing the EBB.

Despite these important actions, the Commission remains understaffed. There is much work to do to build back better, to close the digital divide, and our members stand ready to do it. But that work will be slowed until the vacant seat at the FCC is filled and Acting Chair Rosenworcel is appointed to permanent chair. Her focus on greater opportunity, accessibility, and affordability in our communications services and her tireless advocacy on behalf of workers, educators, students, families and consumers has never been more important.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request on behalf of our unions and our approximately 8 million members across the country.

Sincerely,

Randi Weingarten, President American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

Christopher M. Shelton, President, Communications Workers of America (CWA)

Lonnie R. Stephenson, President, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)

Becky Pringle, President, National Education Association (NEA)

Mary Kay Henry, President, Service Employees International Union (SEIU)