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May 20, 2024

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The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel

Chairwoman
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street, NE
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairwoman Rosenworcel,

I am honored to represent Florida's Congressional District 20, a diverse district encompassing rural, suburban, and urban communities in Broward and Palm Beach County. I am deeply concerned about the FCC's recent proposal, announced on March 5, 2024, to prohibit bulk billing arrangements. This policy shift could disproportionately impact low-income and fixed-income residents, particularly our seniors and veterans who rely on these arrangements for affordable digital access.

This proposal threatens both the affordability and accessibility of essential digital services. Continuous connectivity is essential for the well-being and advancement of the communities I represent. In my district alone, about 50% of households are part of HOAs or apartment communities which could benefit from bulk billing and should continue to have that competitive option to provide the lowest rates to their residents.

Historically, as found by the FCC in 2010, bulk billing arrangements have "predominantly benefited consumers" by enabling seniors, fixed-income individuals, and other residents to aggregate their purchasing power, which often results in more competitive rates and enhanced service quality through investments in all-fiber and other state-of-the-art infrastructures. Eliminating these options would not only widen the digital divide but also deepen existing social and economic disparities.

Moreover, the importance of affordable connectivity cannot be overstated in an era where access to information is not merely a convenience but a necessity. It is imperative that any regulatory changes foster an environment where all individuals, regardless of their economic status, have equitable access to broadband services. This is essential not only for connecting with loved ones but also for accessing health care services, educational materials, and employment opportunities.

Therefore, I urge the Commission to carefully consider the potential adverse effects this proposal may have on the most vulnerable segments across the country and Florida's CD20. It is crucial that FCC policies prioritize maintaining and enhancing access to affordable broadband for all, particularly those in economically disadvantaged and minority communities.

Thank you for your attention to this vital issue. I trust that the Commission will make decisions that reflect the best interests of our diverse and deserving populations.

Should you need any additional information or clarification from my office, please do not hesitate to contact Angelle Kwemo at angelle.kwemo@mail.house.gov, or at 202.225.1313.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sheila', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress

CC:

The Honorable Brendan Carr, FCC Commissioner

The Honorable Geoffrey Starks, FCC Commissioner

The Honorable Nathan Simington, FCC Commissioner

The Honorable Anna Gomez, FCC Commissioner