

WSTA: Broadband Providers United on Keep Americans Connected Pledge

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Madison, WI – Members of Wisconsin’s premier broadband and telecommunications association unanimously endorsed Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai’s Keep Americans Connected Pledge. This commitment will help customers impacted by the coronavirus pandemic retain broadband and telecommunications connectivity.

“WSTA is proud to represent companies united in their support of Chairman Pai’s Keep Americans Connected Pledge,” said Bill Esbeck, executive director of the Wisconsin State Telecommunications Association (WSTA). “Our members care about their customers and the communities they serve. This is just one more example of that commitment.”

Last week, Chairman Pai requested broadband and telephone service providers promote connectivity during the coronavirus outbreak. He emphasized the importance of keeping Americans connected as the country experiences serious disruptions. In order to ensure that Americans do not lose connectivity as a result of these exceptional circumstances, Chairman Pai asked providers to take the Keep Americans Connected Pledge.

The Keep Americans Connected Pledge reads as follows:

Given the coronavirus pandemic and its impact on American society, [Company Name] pledges for the next 60 days to:

(1) not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of

their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic; and

(2) waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic; and

(3) open its Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needs them.

In addition to their unanimous support of the Keep Americans Connected Pledge, WSTA member companies are coordinating and partnering with their local school districts to connect students with internet access. In many cases, WSTA members are waiving installation fees and offering complimentary internet service to students for 90 days or until the end of the school year.

“We are in this together and our companies will look for opportunities to lead by example during the crisis,” Esbeck continued. “The broadband connectivity WSTA members provide is critically important as we confront the social distancing required to flatten the curve of COVID-19.”