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June 27, 2019

The Honorable Brendan Carr, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Carr:

On behalf of the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) in Jackson, Mississippi, I commend you and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for proceeding to a vote on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPR) to advance a \$100 million Connected Care Pilot Program. This important program, first announced by you on our campus, will support telehealth for low-income Americans, specifically those living in rural areas or who are veterans. Mississippi currently ranks 49th in the country when it comes to connectivity to the Internet and the outside world. Furthermore, over 30% of our state's population lacks access to a capable service provider, making this kind of innovative program all the more valuable in states which share these challenges.

As you know, UMMC has been a leader in telehealth for over a decade, and in 2017, was recognized as one of only two federally designated Centers of Excellence in Telehealth. With this designation we are tasked by the Health Resources and Services Administration to explore innovative ways to advance the modern practice of telemedicine.

In Mississippi we face great challenges in rurality and healthcare disparities, but have been successful in leveraging the connections afforded by technology to improve the lives of our citizens through our telehealth programs. UMMC's work to date clearly demonstrates the value of this technology-enabled health care in rural and underserved communities. The FCC Connected Care Pilot would provide resources, connectivity, equipment and training to broaden the reach of today's medical professionals and bring critical services to those miles from care. Additionally, it would strengthen the data collection process so that stakeholders, policymakers and health care providers can more clearly see the benefit that connected care brings to all Americans.

We thank you for your leadership and for your strong support for technology-enabled solutions to today's health care challenges. Please feel free to call on us if we can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

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