

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Facilitating the Deployment of Text-to-911 and Other Next Generation 911 Applications*, PS Docket No. 11-153; *Framework for Next Generation 911 Deployment*, PS Docket 10-255.

The first telephone number I taught my children was 911. It is a number that every one of us knows by heart but every one of us hopes that we will never use. As the old saying goes, you may only call 911 once in your life, but it will be the most important call you ever make.

The challenge to the continued success of 911 is the increasing complexity of our communications systems. Every new way of reaching out creates new possibilities but also new difficulties. Still, over time we have made steady progress bringing new technology into the 911 framework. We expanded 911 service to mobile phones, facilitated development of handset and network solutions for location technology, and made 911 an essential feature of interconnected VoIP. Just last month, in one of Chairman Wheeler's first acts, the Commission took important steps to make our 911 infrastructure more reliable when disaster strikes. This is good stuff.

Today we build on these earlier efforts to make 911 service more accessible. We adopt a policy statement calling on wireless carriers to support text-to-911 capabilities. We also tee up questions about roaming, cost, and promoting adoption in a related rulemaking. I know texting-to-911 can save lives. That is because I have seen it in action in 911 call centers in Vermont and Maryland. I also know that this service could be a game changer for those who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech difficulties. So both the policy statement and rulemaking have my full support.

But with as much as we have already accomplished, more work lies ahead. That is because there are some stubborn gaps in our policies that deserve our attention.

This includes indoor wireless location accuracy. That may sound complicated, but the premise is simple. No matter where you are when you call 911 and no matter what kind of phone you use, you want first responders to find you. When you call 911 from a wired phone, first responders know where you are and where to send help. When you call 911 from a wireless phone outdoors, the Commission has standards that help ensure first responders can locate you and send assistance. But when you call from a wireless phone indoors, cross your fingers, because no location accuracy standards apply. That is an unacceptable gap in our policies. After all, today more than 70 percent of calls to 911 are made from wireless phones. That is over 400,000 calls per day. A lot of these calls are made from indoors. So it is time for a rulemaking to address this problem.

But our work cannot end there. My colleague, Commissioner Pai, has highlighted another critical gap in our 911 infrastructure. So many of our nation's hotels and office buildings rely on multi-line telephone systems for voice service. Although these systems may serve us well when we work and travel, they can come up short in an emergency. I am happy to see that Commissioner Pai is working to find a solution. His efforts have my full support.

Thank you to the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau for your work. It may be a number we may never want to call, but every one of us is grateful for the time you spend on 911. Thank you also to the Chairman for making this - and public safety - a priority.