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Attorney General Frosh Joins Multistate Coalition in Urging the FCC to Increase Internet Access During the Pandemic

BALTIMORE, MD— Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today joined 30 attorneys general in urging the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to fund internet connectivity and internet-enabled devices to K-12 students attending school remotely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This month, the FCC asked for comment on petitions urging the commission to temporarily waive some restrictions on its E-Rate program. Specifically, the attorneys general are urging the FCC to allow schools to extend their broadband internet networks to students' homes and to allow E-Rate funds to support Wi-Fi hotspots or other broadband connections for students who lack adequate internet connectivity. The E-Rate program provides funding to better connect schools and libraries in all parts of the nation—urban, suburban and rural.

In their [comment letter](#) to the FCC, the attorneys general urge the commission to promptly take action to unlock the doors of the virtual classroom while physical schools remain closed during the pandemic.

“Every K-12 student in this country should be able to access online learning resources,” said Attorney General Frosh. “Expanding access to the E-Rate program will help those students continue their education in the midst of this unprecedented health crisis.”

At least 55 million K-12 students in the United States have, at one time or another, been forced to rely on online learning when their classrooms were closed. When schools are closed, the living room, bedroom, or basement becomes the classroom and deserves the same E-Rate support. The attorneys general state in their letter that, given the special circumstances of the pandemic, the FCC is authorized to amend or waive E-Rate program rules as necessary to provide broadband connectivity for remote schooling.

Joining Attorney General Frosh in this letter are the attorneys general of Alaska, Connecticut, Colorado, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New

Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.

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