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Elizabeth Lyle: It's great to be here. Thank you. Good afternoon. I'm so pleased to be here. Just for the record I am a big fan of broadband and technology. I'm carrying a yellow legal pad today because I am a government employee. Our budgets have been cut. My laptop crashed so I'm trying to be available and adjust to the situation and kind of reworking everything with a yellow legal pad but just wanted you to know that we are fans of technology at the FCC.

I really want to thank Jenifer Simpson for inviting me here today. She has been a great advocate, a great friend and she is a great person to have on your side if you're going before the FCC and I want to thank so much Kate Seelman for inviting me as well too. Kate was the first person who helped me make the connection between the FCC's mission and telerehabilitation.

I was fortunate enough to work on the national broadband plan and I'll talk about what that is; we were trying to think a little more broadly at the FCC about making connections, about how broadband can be so important to many national purposes in this country and Kate came down and talked to us at an accessibility workshop. Those were the issues that I was very focused on, accessibility and broadband adoption and she came down and talked in a really persuasive big picture way and illustrated really, I think it was a woman named Veronica if I remember correctly, and talked about teletherapy and telemonitoring and teleconsultation and telehealth IT and there were a lot of us sort of geeks at the

FCC that didn't really get how all the pieces fit together and she really illustrated it in a really helpful way. I hope I can return the favor and talk maybe in a big picture way about the FCC and how we connect to your mission. It seems like you have a terrific program today of getting stakeholders from all fields together and getting them together in one room because I think one thing that's really clear to all of us is how complex these issues are, how many different pieces there are and how important it is to have facilitated dialogues like the discussion today.

Now the national broadband plan was part of the stimulus bill that passed a couple of years ago. Congress asked us to look at how can we make sure that broadband is available to all Americans and that they actually adopt it when we do and that we fully use broadband to serve different national purposes. Whether it is public safety, education, health, civic participation, we were interested in all of these things which was really beyond the traditional purview of the FCC, and this is seen as sort of the big infrastructure project of our day. It is highways. It is electricity. It is all the big projects that we've had in the past. This is what really matters and so we were really trying to take a much broader view than we really do as a traditional regulatory agency. And I'm going to talk in a minute about the accessibility recommendations in the plan because that's what I happen to work on and I think it illustrates a couple of important points about yes we still have regulatory tools that we need to use, but, and I think Jonathan Linkous has made that point as well.

Technology is moving so quickly. We need to think in terms that are much

bigger than just the traditional regulatory tools and thinking about how we are getting all the important stakeholders together to facilitate the conversations that we need to have to come up with solutions. I'll talk a little bit more about that but I did want to mention that the FCC is involved in telerehabilitation in other different ways too besides the accessibility pieces that I'll talk about and I just wanted to make sure that I hit upon them. Jonathan mentioned one of them -- that was the rural health care program -- and that's part of our universal service subsidy fund and we do need to modernize that. That is something that we are working on. I think it's something that clearly people that are interested in telerehabilitation have to know about what's going on with that or plug into that.

Another resource that the FCC has besides money and subsidies is spectrum. And spectrum policy is really important as far as trying to plug into new things like telerehabilitation. We have wireless experimental licensing and so when you're trying to think of new uses and ways to use the spectrum the rules that come out of these proceedings could have an effect. Then there are proceedings that we have that are ongoing that will help promote medical area networks that use shared spectrum and this helps to spur wireless medical devices. So there are a couple of different angles besides just the accessibility that you need to be aware of when you think of what's the FCC's connection here.

I think also because of telehealth and the connection between communications and health care, we have started coordinating with agencies much more than we have in the past, whether it be HHS or NIH or NIST or NTIA,

the VA, the FDA. I mean it's really important that we coordinate from within the government as well.

Now back to the national broadband plan and accessibility. If technologies are not accessible for people with disabilities that's going to be a problem when you try to do telerehabilitation. It's important that the technologies can be used easily and I think we are very focused on that piece of that. And we kind of had three buckets of recommendations which I'll go through quickly. I want to make sure that Kate doesn't come up here and stalk me.

First, the Federal Government itself needs to be a model of accessibility. Patrick was talking a little bit about that in his job as a Section 508 officer and you know, there is a lot that could and needs to be done. Now we have made some progress; I know that the White House has set up a Section 508 initiative, that's what Patrick is talking about. That is basically the rules that say the government's websites and all its technology and equipment that it makes available needs to be accessible. And we have fallen short on that score in the past and it's really important that we not only coordinate on making ourself a model of accessibility but all the different agencies talk to each other about different policies where they overlap and intersect. I think there is an effort being made to make that happen.

The second, the next two recommendations I'm going to make really focus more on the FCC and what we can do with making technology access. One of them was to modernize accessibility laws and recommendations. The national broadband plan endorsed some legislation that was already pending on the Hill

and it passed and it's both telecommunications and video -- and we are really very excited about the fact that it passed. We are very busy at the FCC implementing it but it's the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act and it's a landmark piece of legislation. From our perspective it's the biggest accessibility legislation since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act and it can have a tremendous impact. We focused a lot of resources on it since it has some very tight statutory deadlines. We have been involved in accessibility a long time, as Kate was mentioning, since I think we started passing hearing aid compatibility regulations in the early '80s or telephones. We have set up ways to make relay services so people who are deaf or hard of hearing or have speech disabilities can use the telephone network through a relay operator. We have worked out rules that – and these are all congressional laws -- that make TVs have closed captioning where it could have built-in capability and we have telephone services and equipment access.

So what this new law does is takes these regulatory frameworks and updates them to the Internet age. It's vitally important. You don't want the TV shows that are shown on the Internet not accessible, they need to be captioned as well, for example. Your smart phone needs to be accessible. Anything that's IP-enabled coming over the Internet, whether video voice or text, all these services and all the equipment that people use should be accessible. So I think these regulations will provide some accessibility and it's definitely a platform for engagement. There are going to be real rules that we can enforce. But right now we are setting up this and this is the time where all the stakeholders can get involved

and help us make rules that work. That's what we are all working very hard to do this year. They are a lot of the deadlines coming up in October so we are very busy. That was the second kind of recommendations to update our rules after we said let's make sure the government is a model of accessibility.

The third one goes to what I was talking about earlier which is technology really is moving quickly and I think we need to think outside the box about just having a regulatory approach to accessibility. This is where things like telemedicine come in because your stakeholders are diverse and you know the value of getting all the right people in the room. Instead of just saying we want to make sure that people make products that are accessible or that communications must have access to people with disabilities, I mean that's something you can regulate. Something you can't regulate is all the solutions where if you say I want to make this or that., or I want to use broadband and technology as a means to make people's lives accessible in so many different ways.

Accessibility through technology not just accessibility to technology. And so that's when you start thinking about the national purposes. I mean you can't tell a developer you have to make the next perfect App that will do X, Y and Z. That's not a regulatory thing that would make sense but what you can do is incentivize people, get them together, and get stakeholders invested in saying this is great, this is a new market for us, we want to work with the community. That is, app developers and assistive technology providers together, and solve the problems that need to be solved. And I think you need both.

You need a regulatory framework but I think you also need to be thinking

about how you can work outside this framework. So one of the things that we launched this year at the FCC that stems from the national broadband plan is the Accessibility and Innovation Initiative. And the point of that is to use other tools -- besides regulatory tools -- to get people together to do the right thing. The way that we are starting off is launching a series of challenges. One of the things that the Obama administration has really pushed is using new social network tools and other tools to bring into government problem-solving processes the people that we have never tapped into before. They even launched something called Challenge.gov where they put out really difficult problems and set deadlines and offer prizes.

We – the FCC -- have launched one in cloud computing where we said we were looking for a vision of the cloud, what can cloud computing be, tell us about this in a video, or present to us a video of about five minutes long showing a vision of how cloud computing can be used to help people with disabilities. We've done other sorts of challenges but the idea is to get people together for these challenges. We are going to have a Chairman's AAA award to recognize all the advancements in accessibility or several of the top ones. These are some of the tools that we are using for accessibility. So that's it. Thank you.