CTEDTECH
Connecticut Commission for Educational Technology

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The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Monday, April 6, 2020

Dear Senator Blumenthal,

As you are aware, the coronavirus pandemic has closed schools across Connecticut and the rest of the country. More than half a million students in our state and 50 million nationwide — along with their teachers — may not return to school until August or later. The rapid shift to remote learning, which our Commission and other agencies have supported through various resources, may allow students to continue their education from home. Digital tools connect students to educational materials, classmates, and teachers, but tens of thousands of families with school-aged children — and disproportionately those facing socio-economic challenges — in Connecticut lack high-speed broadband connections. The longer schools remain closed and depend on distance learning, the further these students will fall behind.

Given the urgent and sustained need to ensure that all students and teachers have access to broadband, we encourage you and other members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation to provide at least $2 billion in initial emergency funding to the E-rate program, and to provide E-rate the regulatory flexibility to serve students and educators at home. The additional funding will support the original intent of the E-rate program: ensuring access for all students to the resources necessary for learning.

We greatly appreciate your support in addressing this emergency need so that all learners — including our most vulnerable students — have an equal opportunity to succeed.

Sincerely,

Mark Raymond
Chair, Connecticut Commission for Educational Technology
Chief Information Officer, State of Connecticut

CC: Jonathan Carter, Legislative Aide