

April 22, 2020

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL URGES TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES TO PROTECT CONSUMERS
DURING COVID-19 CRISIS**

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul joined a group of 27 attorneys general in urging the telecommunications industry to make further commitments to protect consumers who are struggling financially as a result of COVID-19, and in calling upon the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for support.

“Residents in Illinois and across the country are relying heavily on the internet and telecommunications systems during the COVID-19 pandemic,” Raoul said. “I urge the FCC to support our coalition by calling on telecommunications companies to expand protections for consumers during this unprecedented time.”

[In a letter sent to the FCC](#), Raoul and the coalition argue that access to the internet and telecommunications systems is critical during the COVID-19 pandemic in order for people to receive important health and safety information, including government and public health orders and advisories. Additionally, stay-at-home orders require students to use these systems to access online learning and employees to access the internet in order to work from home.

On March 13, the FCC announced that many companies had pledged for 60 days to not terminate service to residential or small business customers for nonpayment, waive late fees, and open Wi-Fi hotspots to anyone who needs them. Raoul and the coalition argue that more protections are needed.

Raoul and the coalition ask the FCC to join them in calling on telecommunications companies to:

- Extend the FCC pledge an additional 90 days.
- Use fair and reasonable payment plans to allow customers at least six months after Aug. 11 to pay off any unpaid balances without penalties.
- Reconnect previously disconnected customers.
- Expand data caps and waive overage charges.
- Educate their customers on the COVID-19 related services they are providing and about COVID-19 related scams.

Joining Raoul in the letter are the attorneys general California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Guam, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.