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Universal Service Hearing: Inspiring Universal Service Across America

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Chairman Joseph Heck and Members of the Commission:

Chairman Heck, Members of the Commission, my name is Lisa Mascolo and I serve as Managing Director of IBM's U.S. Public Service global business services unit. I appreciate the opportunity to testify this morning and will provide a brief overview of how IBM is making an impact in communities around the world through service.

For over a century, IBM has valued the importance of service in the communities where we live and work. Today, IBM has a range of initiatives based on the premise that the best way to help communities is by sharing our technologies and professional skills with partner organizations that are addressing social challenges.

This is not a new idea, but it gained momentum in 2003 with the launch of IBM's global initiative to support our employees' volunteering efforts. Since then, IBMers in 80 countries have recorded over 21 million volunteer hours. The program encourages active and retired IBMers to apply their professional skills to community needs, and provides resources to help plan effective volunteer engagements. We also support their volunteering with cash grants to schools and community organizations where IBMers volunteer.

In 2008, we built on that success by launching Corporate Service Corps, an initiative inspired by the Peace Corps. CSC sends teams of IBM's leading experts to work with governmental and social organizations, healthcare providers and other civic leaders to help address high-priority issues in education, health, economic development and community resiliency. CSC is our nation's largest program of its kind and has deployed over 4,000 IBMers to 44 countries, completing over 1,400 projects. To illustrate its work, I'll describe a few recent projects:

- In Ghana, our CSC team developed a strategy and a prototype device to provide digital educational content to schools without Internet access.
- In India, we worked with a nonprofit that's trying to eradicate curable blindness by providing free eye surgeries. Our team designed a portal and provided strategic recommendations to help them better manage data.
- In several Latin American countries, CSC has worked with food banks to develop more efficient inventory and accounting systems. This helped a food bank in Ecuador to increase its food distribution by 63 percent.

- In Australia, we collaborated on innovative ideas for analyzing ocean science data. This project's findings and recommendations could enable better, faster, data-driven decisions for ocean conservation ahead of traumatic climate change damage.

We have many more examples, but the approach is consistent – IBMers apply the same skills and technologies used with commercial clients to support social organizations. We've continued to expand this model through other initiatives.

IBM Health Corps is similar to CSC, but aligned with our healthcare industry expertise and our work to improve cancer care using cognitive technologies. Our flagship Health Corps projects supported the oncology community in sub-Saharan Africa to improve access to care. IBM teams have worked with the American Cancer Society, CARE India, the Taiwan Centers for Disease Control and others on projects intended to reduce disparities in access to healthcare.

Smarter Cities Challenge applied the CSC model to urban challenges, focused on social equity, economic development, emergency management and the environment. Launched in 2010, Smarter Cities sent IBM teams to 138 cities worldwide through 2017.

Another initiative, IBM Impact Grants, provides shorter, 2-day consulting engagements on a wider scale. In 2018, we delivered 312 Impact Grants to nonprofit and educational organizations in 38 countries.

I should also mention P-TECH, the innovative school program that combines high-school and college curricula in a 6-year program. One essential aspect of its success is the mentoring that students get from professionals at IBM and other sponsor companies. We are proud to have originated the P-TECH model and to be a part of the opportunities it provides young students around the world.

IBM's service initiatives continue to evolve and expand, but along a clear trajectory: we have expanded our business to integrate service. In return, IBM sees a triple benefit:

First, we intend to benefit communities with improved education, healthcare, disaster preparedness, or solutions to many other challenges.

Second, we know that IBMers improve their teamwork and leadership skills. They value the opportunity to serve, and want to work at a company that shares that value.

Third, our company benefits from more skilled, engaged, motivated employees who are better prepared to lead a global organization. Sending IBMers on international service assignments offers the chance to lead multicultural teams, understand emerging markets, and address pressing problems on a global scale.

That third benefit is critical because it means our service model is sustainable. These programs are not just charitable expenses, but also investments in our people – and by extension, in our business.

I'd like to conclude with a few words about partnerships, because this corporate service model wouldn't work without partners, nor could it be as valuable or effective.

With each engagement, IBM partners with a social or educational organization. They do the work of education or healthcare or any other social service, and our role is to help them be more effective. Through partners, we can have a much wider impact than we could ever have on our own.

We've also partnered with other companies on joint service engagements, and to share our expertise to help them start their own programs.

IBM also has a long history of partnering with U.S. government agencies. I mentioned earlier that Corporate Service Corps was inspired by the Peace Corps, but it's moved beyond inspiration. In 2016, IBM launched a global public/private partnership with the Peace Corps to collaborate on projects around the world. Since then, we've worked together with demonstrated results in Ghana, Peru, Mexico and the Philippines.

We have also partnered with the United States Agency for International Development on a 2-year initiative to create a Center of Excellence for International Corporate Volunteerism. Through this partnership, IBM sent 94 IBMers to work on USAID projects and contributed nearly \$4 million of in-kind services.

In closing, my message today is that this model of service is working for IBM, it's valued by our employees, and it's having a positive impact in communities throughout our country and around the world. We remain committed to it, and will continue to seek partnerships in the corporate, governmental and nonprofit sectors as we extend IBM's long, proud history of corporate citizenship.