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Via ECFS
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: In the Matter of Petition of USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to
47 U.S.C. Section 160(c); WC Docket No. 18-141; Category 1**

Dear FCC,

I am a consumer who has had DSL since 1999. Initially, it was from AT&T, and I had many problems. Even though my house is less than 3500 feet (as the wires run) from the AT&T Central Office, the measured speed was far less and would be expected for that distance. And it was worse when it rained. Having run computer facilities (1984-2000), I had my suspicions, but AT&T couldn't find any problem.

As soon as I discovered that a competitor - Sonic - was available, I switched. Even though I am served by lines rented by Sonic from AT&T, my service immediately improved. Their remote testing discovered that there was excessive noise on my line and managed to get AT&T to service it. The problem: A nearby section of wire between poles was being used as a highway by squirrels and over the many years their claws had extensively compromised the insulation on the wire. That simple repair of AT&T's wire almost doubled my DSL speed.

My telephone service is bundled with my broadband service from Sonic. When I switched from AT&T, it was both substantially cheaper and provided more services.

A friend who lives nearby was in an area not served by Sonic and constantly had problems with her AT&T service, including multi-day outages. Her complaints yielded no results. When she moved into an apartment in a Sonic service area, she subscribed to them and immediately got excellent service. Additionally, when she mentioned where she was moving from, the technician told her that the service that AT&T had sold her for those many years was known to be unreliable where she had formerly lived.

On my neighborhood's social media group and email lists, there are routinely messages from people trying to escape from lousy service from AT&T and Comcast. And the routine replies are to switch to Sonic.

I live in what is effectively a large city: The urbanized/suburban peninsula between San Jose and San Francisco. I live within walking distance of Stanford University. Also, within walking or short bicycling distance of many high tech companies. Stanford Research Park is a mere two blocks away.

Yet AT&T can't provide adequate service to my neighborhood, and Comcast won't provide competitively priced service.

Broadband service substantially changed how my neighborhood association worked. As more residents got email on their home computers, our membership grew from 120 households in the late 1990s to over 600 households. The switch from predominantly dial-up to broadband was accompanied by the association providing substantially more information about events and local civic/political issues affecting our neighborhood. I know because I was a leader of the association (Board member, VP, President) and was lead on implementing the online presence as well as a major content creator.

I shudder to imagine the problems of a rural area such as the one I grew up in. In 1980-1983, I was a professor in the Computer Science Department at Oregon State University in Corvallis. Because the ARPAnet was very limited, most universities and computer corporations were connected by USENET. Email across the country was often slower than USPS, and it was not uncommon for messages to be lost in transit. Lack of adequate network connectivity was a major reason in my choice to leave academia. When I moved to a company that was on the ARPAnet, it radically changed how I used email and the precursors to the Web.

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