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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,

As a member of the growing freelance workforce, my home is my office and reliable, affordable internet service is my lifeblood. I've been a happy customer of North Bay Area-based competitive provider Sonic for going on a decade. The reasons I ditched one of the large, nationwide providers initially had more to do with being put off by their abysmal customer service than by cost savings. But I've stuck with Sonic for so long--even through a couple incremental price increases--because they continue to provide fast internet at a reasonable price while offering stellar customer service. Anecdotally, I've compared bills and experiences with several neighbors who have subsequently switched to Sonic as well.

By contrast, my mom, who lives in Orange County in Southern California and is a senior on a fixed income, is essentially being extorted by her internet provider to the tune of \$150+ a month. She is an adult-ed teacher and relies on home internet access to receive class information from her supervisors, to communicate with her students, to post grades, etc. Every time her finances get tight we go through her monthly recurring expenses and I dive into research-mode to try to find her a less-expensive alternative for basic internet service. But there simply isn't one in her area because there are NO local competitive providers.

That such a stark contrast exists between the Northern and Southern parts of the state of California is not really surprising, I suppose, given the dominant political ideologies in those regions. And this is not even the most extreme example of how stifling broadband competition excludes people--even whole communities--from full participation in the internet age and information economy!

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