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Aug 30th 2018

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,

Big telecom providers, led by AT&T, are lobbying the FCC to end broadband competition, kill the wholesale market, and cut off customers who have chosen a smaller, local service provider. This includes residential customers like myself, small businesses, schools, libraries, public safety organizations, and local governments. We are all at risk of massive broadband price hikes and poorer service/performance and being stuck with no choice when it comes to their provider, should this petition move forward favorably.

AT&T and big telecom companies (monopolies really) have been trying to kill competition for decades. In May, AT&T's trade group, USTelecom, filed a petition at the FCC that is a poison pill for broadband. The petition, if granted, would allow incumbent providers to escape their obligations under Section 251 of the Communications Act which require them to provide wholesale access to unbundled network elements (UNEs) and certain services. These methods of wholesale access are critical to providing a means of competitive entry that spurs fiber building and innovation. They serve as vital bridges connecting customers to broadband competition. USTelecom is brazenly seeking an unlimited price hike as a provision of its petition. This unfairly targets individuals, communities and institutions who can least afford to pay more just to stay connected (albeit with poorer service and performance).

The Bridge 2 Broadband is a critical part of the broadband marketplace and our greater network ecosystem. If access is cut to this piece of the broadband puzzle, connections throughout the entire network are threatened.

Under the Telecom Act, competitive providers were guaranteed access to these bridges by law to help spur competition in the local marketplace. The law is just now starting to work as intended as small, local providers have popped up in different communities around the country seeking to deploy new networks. Cutting off their access prematurely will stop the deployment race before it even has a chance to really get going. All to the detriment of residential and small business customers, such as myself all across the nation who will face rising prices, slower speeds, poor service and performance or being cut off altogether.

Please REJECT this petition!!!!

ROBERT FURTON