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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,

Remaining a competitive economy as communications becomes integral to so many parts of business and personal affairs requires having low cost, high quality network connectivity for all users. The markets that have the best network connectivity are highly competitive markets in parts of Europe and East Asia. The United States needs to encourage competition in network communications and use regulations to prevent large actors from forming an oligopoly and extracting rent from the whole US market based on their key position as communications providers.

The proposed rule change undermines market competition in crucial parts of the network communications infrastructure as both some long distance and most last mile network links are particularly vulnerable to monopolistic control. Long distance links are vulnerable because there may be little incentive to provide a second link to a small and distant market. Last mile links are vulnerable because the cost of laying last mile infrastructure in established markets. Although very large businesses may be able to afford their own long distance fiber networks and thus continue to negotiate low prices, small businesses and individuals have no similar options. The result will be the entrenching of the market power and advantage of large businesses at the cost of individual success and small business growth. In a fast moving world where national success is predicated on individuals having access to new knowledge to prepare themselves for new jobs with new skills and predicated on entrepreneurial small firms having the opportunity to try new ideas and grow, this imbalance in market power will jeopardize the medium and long term competitive position of the US as a leader in the innovation economy.

The FCC should be seeking to improve access to high quality network connections and the free flow of information in order to empower the US economy rather than empowering telecommunications oligopolists to plunder the American economy by eliminating competition.

I hope that the FCC board will act to the interests of the US economy at large rather than the narrow interests of a few large companies seeking rents.

Bill Lundberg