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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 like to solve my own problems.

I find it's way cheaper to buy a hard drive and do my own backups, rather than pay for some cloud backup service. So I have one small server in my apartment, and another in my mom's house, and synchronize backups between them. I run monitoring dashboards from my house. I host data storage and backups for my friends.

But incumbent ISPs have made this hard. AT&T, Comcast, Verizon and the rest have colluded to decide that consumers should have needlessly slow upload speeds.

I've lived in half a dozen major cities, and the last time I was able to purchase a plan from a cable ISP with uncapped line-rate upload speeds was in 1998 -- when cable modems were first introduced, before the industry decided on this "standard".

What does this mean? It means I can't innovate and solve my own solutions without congesting my link and rendering the internet connection unusable for my roommates and girlfriend.

That was, until Sonic.net. Sonic's symmetric fiber plan was the next I was able to purchase as a consumer with uncapped line-rate upload speeds. This was in 2017 -- 19 years after the last time this was available to me. I had previously had Sonic's DSL package, but the difference was night and day. At long last, I could solve my own problems.

The simple fact is that the communications monopoly has hurt tech sector innovation, and the American spirit of solving your own problems.

Unfortunately I no longer live in Sonic's service area. I moved to Fresno and work from home.

I'm excited for remote work to allow the tech sector to move out of a few expensive cities and around the US. But the communications monopoly has put this at risk.

My neighborhood, near the middle of the city, only has Comcast and AT&T available as residential ISPs. Comcast's offerings are dominant. All my friends, neighbors and I have Comcast service. All local businesses with wifi are served by Comcast.

In the last year, Comcast had a major outage. My entire section of the city had no Internet access. This outage lasted for two days. I had to drive across town to a Starbucks to work.

If a two-day outage of 90% of Internet service happened in San Francisco, there would be riots, and very likely follow-on outages. Fresno is a city of 500,000+ people, but lacks the tech sector presence or political power to pressure the communications monopoly to ensure this doesn't happen.

If the situation is this bad in a large city, I imagine it's dire for rural customers. If I were a rural customer I couldn't depend on my Internet connection at all. My Internet connection might be down for weeks, and there would be no reason for an ISP to fix it.

I write software, and work remotely. I should be able to do this from anywhere. I should be at the edge of the tech sector's exodus out of a few overpriced cities. I should be part of a movement that would help flatten America's skewed political landscape.

That isn't happening, because I'm still a consumer, and I can't argue this point to a customer service representative for a corporate monopoly.

The power all of us have against that monopoly is up to you.

Steven Brudenell