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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,

Please do not stifle competition. This country is losing ground competitively with the rest of the world and a significant part is the excessively priced internet which keeps access away from the growing majority of people in the country. Large companies are focused on mergers and acquisitions to become larger and more powerful. Why? To be able to eliminate competition and increase their power to provide customers less for more.

I am a retired corporate Manager, retired from a leading semiconductor company. When I retired, internet connection was still primarily a dream. I used Comcast at my telecom provider. When they increased my costs by 20% through 4 changes in pricing for my favorite products, adding 20% to my costs in a year, I left for the only other provider in my home area, AT&T. I found a decade of unsatisfactory service while I used dial-up to access the fledgling internet. I switched, at increased cost, to broadband through DSL, which was marginal for my needs. After a decade of spotty service, I was losing connectivity about twice a year, with temporary solutions a real adventure to get.

I finally found the only other practical supplier to my area containing tens of thousands of potential customers. That was Sonic, a small company located nearly a hundred miles away. What a difference. Now, with a price reduction of more than 10%, I get 3 times the speed. We were promised fiber connectivity by Google years ago but that failed to materialize. So with Sonic, I have a small, independent, competitive supplier for the last decade, who pushes AT&T to properly repair their lines, which Sonic now leases for delivery of telecom and home phone service to my house. Instead of a ten minute phone tree which rarely led to a knowledgeable person, I now get one after three rings at Sonic. And I expect my best opportunity for fiber optic connectivity during my lifetime will probably be Sonic, not the large providers focused only on profits.

Please focus on encouraging competitive available products and services in the telecommunications industry, not the opposite!

William Sherman