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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 urge the FCC to deny this petition for "forbearance of enforcement".

"Forbearance of enforcement" is a euphemism for "impunity to break the law without sanctions".

Congress enacted this law for good reasons, which remain valid today, and the FCC should fully enforce it.

"Last-mile" connectivity is a natural monopoly or oligopoly. I live in row house in an exceptionally densely populated neighborhood in a large and well-connected city, San Francisco. But even here, in a best-case location, I have only 2 or 3 options for last-mile connectivity: twisted-pair copper (originally installed for telephones), coaxial cable (initially installed for cable TV), and *maybe* fiber-to-the-home.

The copper pair I use for DSL connectivity was installed when the local phone company (whose successor is the current ILEC) was a publicly-franchised utility with a government-granted monopoly. The same is true of much coaxial last-mile infrastructure built out under government-granted monopoly franchises.

It would be grossly unfair to grant *exclusive* use of this infrastructure -- built under government-enforced protection as a monopoly -- to the ILEC, without protecting the right of competitors to fair and equal access.

If this petition is granted, and ILECs are able to raise prices or deny access to would-be competitors with impunity, ILECs would be remiss in their fiduciary duty to their shareholders if they didn't raise prices sufficiently to put their competitors out of business, or cut off their access entirely.

The losers would be ordinary Internet users like me and the other members of my household.

For many years, I have had DSL service from a small independent ISP, with last-mile connectivity over a copper pair rented from the ILEC and a DSLAM co-located at the ILEC central office in my

neighborhood. Real estate prices in San Francisco would make obtaining space for these facilities on a standalone basis, rather than sharing ILEC infrastructure, prohibitively expensive for any small ISP.

The issue isn't so much whether we would pay more or less for Internet access from a competitive ISP if you grant this petition for "forbearance" (although I assume we would pay more, if it continued to be possible at all), but whether any such service would be available at all.

I work from home, and my livelihood depends on reliable, *uncensored* Internet connectivity. I'm a freelance journalist, and I do much of my research on the Internet. I research and write on controversial topics. My work routinely requires me to access information which some censors might not approve of. I sometimes need to run services at my home, or upload or download large files.

Not all "Internet connectivity" is the same.

My current ISP offers uncensored, unfiltered, equal-access connectivity as a common carrier of packets. They do not censor my Internet access, monetize my usage by selling data to advertisers, or prioritize some packets over others on the basis of their origin, destination, packet type, or content.

No such service is offered *at any price* by the ILEC in my area, or by most ILECs.

The terms of service offered by the ILEC (over the same copper pair used by my current ISP, or over fiber-to-the-home) allow the ILEC to block or delay traffic on the basis of the origin, destination, packet type, or content (based on deep packet inspection).

I rely on Internet connectivity for my livelihood. On the rare occasions when I have had outages or problems, I can reach a human support technician quickly. If they can't resolve the problem from their office, or the ILEC facility in my neighborhood, they come to my home, promptly, fix the problem, and follow up to make sure that it has been fixed.

I had DSL service directly from the ILEC in my area before I switched to a competitive ISP, and the service from the ILEC was markedly inferior in every respect.

Current rules already create difficult conditions for ISPs that want to compete with ILECs or to offer products and services -- such as uncensored Internet access that treats all packets equally -- that ILECs don't offer. Please preserve this small vestige of competition and fully your duty to enforce the law by denying this petition for "forbearance of enforcement".

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