

Georgia Berland
415 Grant Street
Healdsburg CA 95448

Sep 6th 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,

I am a consultant and work mostly outside my small town, sometimes even internationally. Dependable, affordable broadband internet is essential to my small business and that of many others in smaller communities.

I've tried the big companies (AT&T, Comcast) and find they are neither dependable nor affordable. Sonic.net, the smaller company I've used most recently, is both. This is true with landline telephone service as well as broadband.

Decreasing competition would further aggravate issues of affordability and dependability. Larger companies are lax in responding to repair or other needs in more rural areas. I've had to wait days for AT&T to discover a problem was in their office, let alone make it to my town for a repair. And they offered next to nothing in compensation (\$5) for repeated incidents of days without service admittedly caused by them! Sonic.net is locally-based in a nearby city and is quick and responsive. Time is definitely money in a small business.

Price hikes that would be inevitable with less competition would not only hurt my small business but many others, and residential customers as well.

Please preserve consumer choice, support small business, the lifeblood of America, and work to increase, not decrease competition in the broadband and telephone industries.

Georgia Berland