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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 USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to  
47 U.S.C. Section 160(c); WC Docket No. 18-141; Category 1**

Dear FCC,

I have been a customer of Sonic, an independent internet provider, for a number of years. On my advice my church also became a customer. Both accounts were previously with SBC/AT&T in Palo Alto, CA, a dense suburban environment and center of technical innovation. However, for residential and small business users, the regulated internet offerings are very poor, overall and especially from a price performance basis. I hope that Sonic will eventually provide an end-to-end service, but today both locations are served by using AT&T infrastructure. The value add Sonic provides to me as a customer are: pricing and customer service. Both accounts require Sonic value add. In addition the existence of a vendor with better pricing and vastly superior customer service offers competitive incentive to AT&T - for residential and small business accounts. Here are some other facts.

+ Our church is a small congregation with limited budget. We had voice only service from AT&T. For about \$5/month additional we converted to voice and internet. Internet access is important to offer our facility to other community groups (which we do at no charge), as well as enriching the congregations non-worship activities.

+ I work from home. Over the years, Sonic has been able to upgrade my internet connection by almost 4x, while keeping costs at about 1.4x of original price, with no contract commitment or one time charges. I could not approach this pricing with AT&T, and would be required to enter into a contract to get their most competitive pricing. Even though our finances could allow higher internet access costs, self employed knowledge workers often have a limited budget.

+ We own property in London, United Kingdom. We rent internet service and voice service there with broadly the same specifications as did from AT&T and now do from Sonic. We pay 1/3 for this service of what AT&T would charge, and about half what Sonic charges. As an American this is a red flag for our ability to be competitive in the world arena: for home workers, access to internet at semi-public locations.

+ The customer service Sonic offers is in a different class to AT&T, and the reason I switched from AT&T originally. Over the years there have been periodic outages and service degradation to

internet service. As a Sonic customer I am directly connected with a trained level 2 technician, who has during the different scenarios of technical issues encountered a) diagnose a problem, b) offer on-the-line remedial advice, c) enter order for replacement equipment, d) directly interface with AT&T when line diagnostic information needed. As an AT&T customer I never directly interacted with a level 2 technician, and each of the four functions mentioned required multiple interactions - often through intermediary departments and clerks. The added value that this small service provider is able to offer in this area is extremely significant, to service reliability, to customer satisfaction.

I encourage you to retain and strengthen all regulations which encourage a competitive broadband marketplace. All first world economies I know of regulate open access to copper & fiber by independent service providers.

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