

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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December 11, 2018

The Honorable Ajit Pai, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

I write to highlight the voices of my constituents and express serious concerns against a forbearance petition filed with the FCC by USTelecom (WC Docket No. 18-141), which impacts provisions of the bipartisan Telecommunications Act of 1996 meant to ensure competition in the telecommunications marketplace.

Constituents have weighed in expressing the need for choice, competitive prices, and quality service when shopping for broadband and telecommunication services. As you know, the 1996 Act allowed alternative competitive providers to enter the market and compete with incumbent carriers. Individuals and small businesses from California's 24th Congressional District have written in to underscore how alternative competitive providers over the years have met their unique local needs, kept services affordable, and fostered innovation and investment along the Central Coast.

I am particularly concerned about the petition's impacts on 911 and emergency service networks in my district which rely on unbundled network elements. After a difficult two years recovering from fatal mudslides and wildfires, my constituents need clear evidence that any reversal of 1996 rules would yield no negative impacts on the ability to swiftly respond to emergencies. The petition before the FCC does not offer sufficient evidence on this matter, or on its impact to everyday services to consumers, small businesses, schools, libraries, and other institutions vital to our local community and economy.

Pursuant to the 1996 Act, the FCC has an obligation to ensure competition is taking place in the telecommunications marketplace. While the 1996 Act allows for consideration of forbearance on these obligations, USTelecom's proposal to remove market entry provisions is troubling without detailed market-by-market analysis, including impacts on the Central Coast of California.

I urge the Commission to carefully study the impacts of USTelecom's petition and deny forbearance in the absence of clear and definitive data on the impact to competition across the varied US markets. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress