

ALBANY CALIFORNIA



CITY OF ALBANY
1000 SAN PABLO AVENUE
ALBANY, CA 94706
www.AlbanyCA.org

Ajit Pai, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

October 1, 2018

Letter Opposing Telecommunications Act Forbearance

Dear Mr. Pai,

The Albany City Council opposes the Petition for Forbearance of USTELECOM, which calls for the forbearance of the 1996 Telecommunications Act. Currently, the Act requires incumbent internet service providers (ISPs) and established service carriers to make bare copper lines, other copper-based network elements, and fiber optics available for rent at regulated prices. These critical unbundled network elements (UNEs) enable small internet providers to deploy equipment and provide services at a competitive price. UNE copper services are essential to a fair market because it allows small providers to aggregate demand and serve customers while deploying fiber.

The 1996 Telecommunications Act serves as the legal backbone for constituting business models for various small and independent ISPs that do not have the financial or human capital to personally procure or invest in market viable network infrastructure. There is already a lack of competitive choice in internet access and telecom service. If the petition is approved, independent carriers in Albany and across the country will lose access to critical network elements, and consumers could lose their choice of providers.

The City of Albany strives to ensure fair competition for the benefit of businesses and consumers. When reviewing the Petition for Forbearance of USTELECOM, it is important to consider the negative effects it will have on fair competition.

Sincerely,


Peggy McQuaid
Albany Mayor

cc. Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Kamala Harris
Congress Member Barbara Lee