



May 19, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Marlene S. Dortch
Secretary Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW Washington, DC 20554

Re: In The Matter Of Petition Of USTelecom For Forbearance Pursuant To 47 U.S.C. § 160 To Accelerate Investment In Broadband And Next Generation Networks, WC Docket 18-141, Ex Parte Communication, Letter In Support Of Motions For Extension Of Time

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy (Advocacy) submits the following comments expressing support for several motions filed by affected small business stakeholders requesting that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) extend the time period allowed for comment in the above referenced matter.

About the Office of Advocacy

Congress established Advocacy under Pub. L. 94-305 to represent the views of small entities before Federal agencies and Congress. Advocacy is an independent office within the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA); as such the views expressed by Advocacy do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA or the Administration. Congress crafted the RFA to ensure that regulations do not unduly inhibit the ability of small entities to compete, innovate, or to comply with federal laws.¹ In addition, the RFA's purpose is to address the adverse effect that "differences in the scale and resources of regulated entities" has had on competition in the marketplace.²

Advocacy Supports an Extension of Time for Comments in this Proceeding

On May 4, 2018 USTelecom filed a petition (the petition) with the FCC requesting a grant of nationwide forbearance from regulations regarding the unbundling and resale mandates imposed

¹ *Regulatory Flexibility Act, Pub. No. 96-354, 94 Stat. 1164 (1980)*, Findings and Purposes, Sec. 2 (a)(4)-(5), 126 Cong. Rec. S299 (1980).

² *Id.*, Sec. 4, 126 Cong. Rec. S299 (1980).

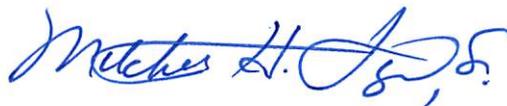


on incumbent local exchange carriers (ILECs) under the 1996 Telecommunications Act, among other regulatory requirements.³ The FCC subsequently established a pleading cycle for public comment on May 8, 2018 giving affected parties only 30 days to provide comments and/or file opposition, with a 15 day reply comment period.⁴

Small business interest in this item is significant, and the FCC should accommodate the stakeholders who have asked for more time to provide their input and opinions on the petition. Advocacy has spoken directly with small businesses that have not only significant substantive concerns regarding the petition, but also concerns about the lack of time they've been given to properly inform the FCC about the impact the petition could have on their businesses and their customers. The petition raises complex questions of law and fact that must be analyzed by the FCC before it can make a decision, and Advocacy believes that granting additional time for affected parties to provide a substantive record for the FCC to consider is justified.

Advocacy urges the FCC to give full consideration to the above issues and recommendations. If you have any questions or require additional information please contact me or Assistant Chief Counsel Jamie Saloom at 202/205-6890, or by email at Jamie.Saloom@sba.gov.

Sincerely,



Mitchell H. Tyner, Sr.
Acting Chief Counsel
Office of Advocacy
U.S. Small Business Administration



Jamie Belcore Saloom
Assistant Chief Counsel
Office of Advocacy
U.S. Small Business Administration

³ See Petition of USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 160(c) to Accelerate Investment in Broadband and Next-Generation Networks, WC Docket No. 18-141 (filed May 4, 2018) (“Petition”).

⁴ *Pleading Cycle Established for Comments on USTelecom’s Petition for Forbearance from Section 251(c) Unbundling and Resale Requirements and Related Obligations, and Certain Section 271 and 272 Requirements*, Public Notice, WC Docket No. 18-141, DA 18-475 (rel. May 8, 2018).