[Letterhead]

[DATE]

The Honorable Tina McKinnor

Member, California State Assembly

1021 O Street, Suite 5520

Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 470 – OPPOSE

As Amended March 17, 2025

Dear Assembly Member McKinnor:

On behalf of [county/organization], we regretfully oppose your Assembly Bill 470, which would allow a Carrier of Last Resort (COLR) provider to abandon essential responsibilities and phase out reliable and affordable access to basic telephone service for all Californians.

AB 470 automatically relieves any provider of its COLR obligations when it sends a notice to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) when it self-determines that it currently has no customers or population in a particular area, and it is “well-served” by alternative voice services. This bill establishes a process wholly outside of any oversight framework, gifting for-profit monopolies with financial incentives to make self-interested findings and be the sole arbiters to the truth and accuracy of that information.

Moreover, the customer challenge process outlined in AB 470 is also outside of any neutral venue, like the CPUC. Given the COLR’s notice to the CPUC is automatically deemed approved, any successful customer challenge is a farce. AB 470 limits *successful* customer challenges to two years of continued service, and makes no guarantees that any service be available to the customer following that time period given the lack of COLR protections.

The CPUC’s core function is to balance procedures and safeguards to protect consumers as well as ensure the provision of safe, reliable utilities and infrastructure at reasonable rates. AB 470 puts the industry’s interests ahead of the needs of a diverse state. COLR rules remain essential and must continue to prioritize consumer protections and universal access while facilitating the transition to modern networks.

We support the evolution to more advanced technologies that provide reliability, redundancy and ubiquitous access to connectivity, for both internet and voice service. However, AB 470 does not provide a true transition process for communities to receive these modern telecommunications offerings and instead is a process for companies to phase out essential services at the cost of public safety and consumer safeguards.

For these reasons, we oppose AB 470.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

cc: Members of the Assembly Communications and Conveyance Committee

[Insert Your State Assemblymember]

Tracy Rhine, Senior Policy Advocate, Rural County Representatives of California