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February 18, 2015

The Hon. Senator Eric Schmitt
Chairman, Senate Committee on Jobs, Economic
Development, and Local Government
201 W. Capitol Avenue
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Senator Schmitt:

We, the private-sector companies and associations listed below, urge you not to pass **SB266** because the bill, as applied to advanced communications capabilities and services, will harm both the public and private sectors, retard economic growth, prevent the creation or retention of thousands of jobs, hamper work force development, and diminish the quality of life in Missouri. In particular, these bills will hurt the private sector by derailing or unnecessarily complicating and delaying public-partnerships, by interfering with the ability of private companies to make timely sales of equipment and services to public broadband providers, by denying private companies timely access to advanced networks over which they can offer business and residential customers an endless array of modern products and services, and by impairing economic and educational opportunities that contribute to a skilled workforce from which businesses across the state will benefit.

The United States must compete in a global economy in which advanced communications networks are playing an increasingly significant role. The U.S. needs affordable access to such networks in as many communities as possible, as rapidly as possible, so that innovators can develop next-generation applications and services that will drive economic growth and global competitiveness. Unfortunately, in many of America's communities, particularly in rural areas,

the current communications service providers are unable or unwilling to invest in advanced communications networks rapidly enough to enable the communities to stay abreast of their peers elsewhere in the United States and around the world. These communities should be free of artificial barriers, including the cumbersome, time-consuming, expensive, and ambiguous requirements of SB266 and HB437, to do their part to help bring affordable high-capacity broadband connectivity to all Americans and to advance America's global competitiveness.

Communities in Missouri and across America are eager to work with willing established carriers, enter into public-private partnerships with new entrants, develop their own networks, if necessary, or create other innovative means of acquiring affordable access to advanced communications capabilities. These are fundamentally local decisions that should be made by the communities themselves, through the processes that their duly elected and accountable local officials ordinarily use for making comparable decisions.

We support strong, fair, and open competition to ensure that users can enjoy the widest range of choices and opportunities. SB266 and HB437 would take us in the wrong direction. They are bad for Missouri communities, particularly rural communities. They are bad for the private sector, particularly high-technology companies. And they are bad for America's global competitiveness. **Please do not pass SB266 or any amendment or other measure that could significantly impair community broadband deployments or public-private partnerships in Missouri.**

Sincerely,

Alcatel-Lucent
American Public Power Association
Atlantic Engineering Group
Connecting for Good
CTC Technology & Energy
Fiber to the Home Council
Google
National Association of Telecommunications
Officers and Advisors
Netflix
OnTrac
Telecommunications Industry Association
Utilities Telecom Council

cc: The Hon. Senator Kurt Schaefer
Members of the Senate Committee on Jobs, Economic Development
and Local Government