



**Carolyn Ridley**  
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Director of Government Relations

April 18, 2018

RE: Opposition to Senate Bill 105

Dear Chair Grad and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

By way of introduction, I am the Director of Government Affairs for CenturyLink. On November 1, 2017, CenturyLink bought Level 3 Communications for \$34B, making CenturyLink the second largest U.S. communications provider to global enterprise customers. We operate in more than 60 countries, 500 markets and in all 50 states, including Vermont. Through its entities, CenturyLink has invested more than \$47M in network infrastructure in Vermont. The newly combined company has greater scale and scope as we are looking to deploy more advanced services in states where there are revenue opportunities and where rules and statutes are conducive to expansion.

As a provider of advanced communications services and network, CenturyLink provides services that benefit the businesses of Vermont. If passed, Senate Bill 105 would prohibit forced arbitration of consumer disputes as "consumer" is defined to include corporations. As a multistate and global corporation, CenturyLink contracts for services with business customers. These customers are not only sophisticated themselves, but generally have attorneys who review the contracts before the companies sign. In many cases, these types of contracts provide for services covering numerous states. Having state specific contracting provisions discourages CenturyLink and other companies from doing business in those states.

We believe that constituents of Vermont are best served by policies that bring new businesses and advanced services to the citizens and companies of Vermont. ***CenturyLink encourages the Vermont General Assembly to refrain from passing SB 105 or, at a minimum, exempt contracts for business communications service from its statutory provisions.***

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn Ridley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn Ridley