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FBM is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization with an all-volunteer Board.

California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Subject: Denial of AT&T's Request to Remove their Carrier of Last Resort Obligation for Banner Mountain in Nevada County (A2303003 – Proceeding)

Dear Commissioners,

The Friends of Banner Mountain (FBM) is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to protect Banner Mountain and its natural and cultural resources for the benefit of residents, visitors, and future generations. Banner Mountain is a rural unincorporated area of Nevada County and is home to approximately 3000 residents. We are writing to express our concern regarding AT&T's request to be relieved of its obligation to provide traditional landline phone service, also known as the Carrier of Last Resort (COLR), to our community. We strongly urge the CPUC to deny AT&T's request for the following reasons:

1. **Lack of Viable Alternative Service:** Many households on Banner Mountain currently lack viable alternatives to traditional landline service. Cell phone coverage is poor on much of Banner Mountain and removing AT&T's COLR obligation would leave residents without a dependable means of communication.
2. **Emergency Situations:** Access to 911 services is critical for our public safety. Every year Banner Mountain loses power during snowstorms and other emergencies, sometimes for weeks at a time. Wildfires are also a constant threat, and having a reliable landline connection during wildfires and other emergencies is crucial for the safety of our residents.
3. **Community Impact:** Traditional landlines foster communication and connectivity among the residents of Banner Mountain. Removing this service would disrupt the social fabric and compromise safety. Banner Mountain is home to many retirees and elderly individuals, some of whom are hearing-impaired. Some residents use hearing aids with headsets compatible with landline telephones to effectively communicate.
4. **Legal Obligations:** AT&T has a legal obligation under California law to provide COLR service. Granting their request would set a precedent that undermines the rights of residents across the state.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We hope that the CPUC will make a decision that serves the best interests of the residents of Banner Mountain and for the entire state.

Sincerely,

Edward Sylvester, President
Friends of Banner Mountain