



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
CONNECTICUT

WILLIAM TONG
ATTORNEY GENERAL

July 1, 2021

By Email

Lee Schroeder
Executive Vice President, Government & Community Affairs/Chief Diversity Officer
Altice USA
1 Ct Square W
Long Island City, NY, 11101

Request for Information – Response due by July 19, 2021

Dear Ms. Schroeder:

I am writing to express my strong objection to Optimum by Altice's ("Optimum") announced plan to establish new service and pricing tiers for its broadband customers that would dramatically decrease internet upload speeds from 35 megabits per second ("Mbps") to as little as 5 (the "Plan"). News accounts of Optimum's Plan indicate that Optimum intends to force its consumers to accept lower upload speeds, or pay premium prices, to receive the upload speeds currently offered existing customers. Optimum's Plan not only raises prices on essential broadband services, it further exacerbates the "digital divide" in Connecticut at a time when the continuing coronavirus pandemic has made more families reliant than ever on their broadband service. Optimum's actions also run directly contrary to the Governor's and legislature's stated goals of achieving upload speeds of 100 Mbps as quickly as possible. Public Act 21-159, *An Act Concerning Equitable Access to Broadband*, Sec. 3(c). Put bluntly, Optimum is simply moving in the wrong direction.

Broadband internet access is an essential public service, particularly during the ongoing pandemic. Connecticut residents have come to depend on broadband services to ensure they can access vital public health, safety, welfare information, and communications, to allow students to participate in online learning and to enable people to work remotely. Many people in Connecticut are struggling right now, and many Connecticut families are facing very difficult financial and economic circumstances. The last thing our residents need to worry about at this time is whether they will see decreased functionality of their broadband service, or, incur significant expense in order to receive the same level of service that Optimum offers its customers today.

It is simply unconscionable to raise rates on Connecticut families when they *both* need broadband internet the most and are least able to bear higher cost for adequate service. I urge you to reconsider implementing Optimum's Plan by: (a) canceling the Plan altogether; or, at the very least (b) postponing the Plan for one year or until the current economic and public health crisis is over. I also request that you answer the questions attached hereto about Optimum's Plan no later than July

165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

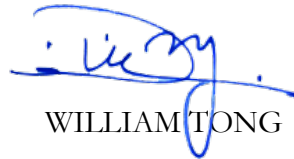
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19, 2021. (*See* Exhibit A). Please provide your responses to these questions to Assistant Attorneys General John Wright (john.wright@ct.gov) and Lauren Bidra (lauren.bidra@ct.gov).

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter of public health and safety.

Very truly yours,



WILLIAM TONG

Enclosure

Exhibit A

Optimum's Internet Speed Reduction Plan

- 1) Please provide a full narrative explanation of Optimum's decision to reduce the cable internet upload speeds for internet plans that currently have advertised upload speeds of 35 megabits per second ("Mbps") to upload speeds between 5-20 Mbps, effective July 12, 2021 (the "Plan"). Please identify and produce all data and analysis supporting Optimum's Plan.
- 2) Please explain why Optimum decided to implement this Plan to reduce cable internet upload speeds in Connecticut at this time.
- 3) Optimum's public statements about the Plan indicate that this Plan would bring the company in line with other internet service providers. Please identify the Connecticut internet service providers referenced and explain how the Plan brings Optimum in line with them.
- 4) Please identify the legal basis for Optimum's Plan.
- 5) Please produce all Board of Directors minutes related to Optimum's Plan.
- 6) Please describe how Optimum's Plan to reduce upload speeds comports with Section 3(c) of Public Act 21-159, *An Act Concerning Equitable Access to Broadband*, concerning the state-wide goal of universal access to Internet upload speeds of 100 Mbps.
- 7) Please identify each state in which Optimum provides internet service. Please identify all states in which Optimum has or will reduce internet upload speeds and the date of the upload speed reduction.

Optimum's Connecticut Customers

- 8) Please identify the current number of Optimum internet customers in Connecticut and the number of Connecticut internet customers by year since 2018. Please provide this data disaggregated for residential and commercial accounts as well as for cable and fiber internet customers.
- 9) Please identify the municipalities that Optimum serves in Connecticut. Please list whether cable internet, fiber internet, or both are available in each municipality and in what ratios.
- 10) Please identify the number of Optimum internet customers in Connecticut that are served by fiber-to-the-premises ("FTTP") compared to fiber-to-the-node ("FTTN").
- 11) Please identify the number of Optimum internet customers in Connecticut whose only broadband internet service provider option is Optimum. Please disaggregate this information by the Connecticut municipality such customers live in.

- 12) Please separately identify the cable and fiber Internet infrastructure upgrades Optimum has made in each municipality in which it operates in Connecticut since 2018 including the costs.
- 13) Please identify and describe all cable and fiber internet plans that Optimum currently offers in Connecticut including bundled plans with video services. For each plan, please list the price, the municipalities in which the plans are available and internet download and upload speeds available and provided for each offer.
- 14) Please identify and describe all cable and fiber internet plans that Optimum intends to offer to new Connecticut customers as of July 12, 2021, including bundled plans with video services. Please list the prices, the municipalities in which those plans will be available and internet download and upload speeds for each offer.
- 15) Please identify and describe all cable and fiber internet plan options that Optimum intends to offer to its existing Connecticut customers as of July 12, 2021 who elect to change internet service plans without experiencing a reduction in upload speeds.
- 16) Will Optimum waive cancellation fees for existing customers who may elect to change internet plans or internet providers on or after July 12, 2021?
- 17) Does Optimum currently impose any form of data cap on Connecticut customers? If not, please describe whether and when Optimum has plans to impose a data cap on Connecticut customers.
- 18) How many customers does Optimum anticipate will be affected by Optimum's Plan?
- 19) What will the financial impact be on those customers affected by Optimum's Plan to achieve the same level of service under Optimum's current fee structure?
- 20) How much does Optimum anticipate each customer will pay in addition under Optimum's Plan to achieve the same level of service under Optimum's current fee structure?
- 21) How will Optimum's Plan impact Optimum's revenue on a quarterly basis?
- 22) How will Optimum's Plan impact Optimum's earnings on a quarterly basis?
- 23) What hardship or forbearance programs does Optimum currently have to assist low income families, or families who are otherwise unable to pay their broadband bills?
- 24) What hardship or forbearance programs does Optimum currently have to assist low income families, or families who are otherwise unable to pay the additional costs under Optimum's Plan?

Optimum's Customer Service Plan

- 25) Please produce an exemplar of all communications, advertisements and offers that Optimum has sent or will send to Connecticut customers related to Optimum's Plan concerning the Plan and its implementation, including the date(s) and method(s) of communication.

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- 26) Please produce all customer service scripts related to Optimum's Plan that Optimum is using or plans to use.
- 27) Please produce all Connecticut marketing materials that offer internet plans with upload speeds between 5-20 Mbps effective July 12, 2021.