

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

THE CENTRUYLINK COMPANIES - QWEST CORPORATION; CENTURYTEL OF
WASHINGTON; CENTURYTEL OF INTERISLAND; CENTURYTEL OF
COWICHE; AND UNITED TELEPHONE COMPANY OF THE NORTHWEST

Respondent.

DOCKET UT-240029

**CROSS-EXAMINATION EXHIBIT OF SEAN BENNETT
ON BEHALF OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
PUBLIC COUNSEL UNIT**

EXHIBIT SB-__X

Public Comment Hearing Transcript Excerpt of Joseph Mederios, *WUTC v. CenturyLink*,
Docket UT-240029

July 15, 2024

1 Thank you very much.

2 CHAIR DANNER: All right. Thank you very much for your
3 comments.

4 And let me know turn to Joseph Medeiros.

5 Are you there?

6 MR. MEDEIROS: Yes, I am, sir.

7 CHAIR DANNER: Yes. Go ahead, sir.

8 MR. MEDEIROS: Okay. Much like what the lady just spoke
9 about, I live in rural east Pierce County, between South
10 Prairie and Orting, in a small community. We have been
11 working -- or trying to work with CenturyLink for years to
12 correct the problems.

13 Back in 2021, we realized that the copper network was not
14 sustainable. They -- the parts and system here are old, and
15 there are no replacements. We worked with CenturyLink on a
16 study to replace the copper with fiberoptic cable. This
17 study was conducted entirely by CenturyLink and their
18 personnel and their technical people, who were great. They
19 came up with a price of \$265,000.

20 We then obtained a grant from the state of Washington to
21 replace the wiring.

22 At the last minute, CenturyLink backed out.

23 Now, when I converse with technical people that I see
24 working the lines -- we are a low-revenue area. And this is
25 borne out by -- also by the state of Washington's chart. We

1 are a low-revenue area, and so they're not going to put any
2 more effort into our area.

3 So somebody higher up must have saw what was happening and
4 changed the plan, canceled that. So now we continue to with
5 a low-revenue area.

6 When the phone system goes down, which it has -- okay? --
7 as early as January and February of this year, when it goes
8 down, it's not down for hours. It's not for days. It's
9 down for weeks. This is extremely hard.

10 When other utilities go down, like, Puget Sound Energy, at
11 least you can have a battery backup.

12 With CenturyLink, there is no backup. You are stuck. Our
13 security, we have to manually walk through the security
14 system.

15 And, again, in this whole process, when I talked to the
16 technical people onsite, working the lines, their answer to
17 me is -- when I asked them about the -- getting that
18 fiberoptic back in, they told me, no way. We're low
19 revenue. The solution that they offered me was for me to
20 move.

21 I am not going to move. Okay?

22 When this -- when they backed out on the remedying the
23 problem, I contacted Comcast, which Comcast operates in
24 Orting, two miles away. And I was told by Comcast, they
25 said, "Joe, sorry. We cannot help you. You, quote, belong

1 to CenturyLink. There's a monopoly. And we can't do
2 anything about it."

3 So, again, we are doomed. We can't -- if CenturyLink
4 doesn't work, we can't go anywhere else. There is nowhere
5 to turn.

6 And whatever they're trying to do now, I suspect their
7 motivation. It's just not right. How can -- how can they
8 be allowed to discriminate on who gets what service in what
9 area? Puget Sound Energy doesn't discriminate. I get the
10 same electrical service in our area that people get in
11 Bonnie Lake, get in Orting, anywhere else.

12 But not CenturyLink. And they shouldn't be allowed to
13 discriminate regarding their services.

14 So thank you very much for allowing me to speak. Thank
15 you again.

16 CHAIR DANNER: I appreciate your taking time to meet with
17 us tonight and share your thoughts. Thank you.

18 Nora Sheridan, are you there?

19 Nora Sheridan?

20 All right. Norma Fried, are you there?

21 All right. Dorn Campbell, are you there?

22 Kate Richardson, are you here?

23 KATE RICHARDSON: Yes. Yes.

24 CHAIR DANNER: All right.

25 Go ahead.