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February 26, 2020

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone:

On behalf of PG&E Corporation, the parent company of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), I write to thank you and Congressman Jerry McNerney (CA-09) for your leadership in introducing H.R. 5926, the “Reinforcing and Evaluating Service Integrity, Local Infrastructure, and Emergency Notification for Today’s Networks Act.” I also would like to take this opportunity to share our views on H.R. 5926, which is scheduled to be discussed before the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology on Thursday, February 27, 2020. This legislation would amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for expedient restoration of advanced communications service networks during times of emergency.

PG&E is one of the largest combined natural gas and electric utilities in the United States. Based in San Francisco, with more than 24,000 employees, the company delivers some of the nation’s cleanest energy to nearly 16 million people – or one in 20 Americans – throughout a 70,000-square-mile service area in Northern and Central California.

Following the devastating California wildfires in 2017 and 2018, PG&E is significantly enhancing its approach and urgently taking action to adapt its electric system to the unique and growing wildfire threat. Building upon efforts and lessons learned over the last several years, PG&E’s comprehensive, risk-based 2020 Wildfire Mitigation Plan includes three key objectives: 1) reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire from electrical equipment by mitigating the known causes of ignitions; 2) reduce the spread of wildfires by increasing PG&E’s understanding of upcoming and real-time weather and fire conditions; and 3) reduce the impacts of Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events, in which PG&E proactively shuts off power during extreme fire conditions that could result in a wildfire ignition from PG&E’s assets.

PG&E appreciates the patience and understanding of our customers and recognizes the associated hardships they experienced during the nine PSPS events that occurred in 2019 for safety. Moving forward, PG&E is committed to reducing the impact of PSPS events for customers, including critical infrastructure customers such as telecommunication carriers, by

making future events smaller in scope, shorter in duration, and smarter in performance. PG&E is actively seeking and incorporating feedback from its stakeholders and customers to increase preparedness and coordination now, before the next wildfire season, in addition to implementing its broader wildfire safety measures.

Specific to telecommunication carriers, PG&E began outreach in advance of the 2018 wildfire season to increase awareness, mutual preparedness and coordination for PSPS events, which included workshops and hundreds of one-on-one discussions. During PSPS events, PG&E aims to provide critical infrastructure customers 48-72 hours' advance notification of a potential shutoff event, whenever possible. However, PG&E is committed to continuous improvement and is currently working to enhance and formalize this collaboration with telecommunications providers in 2020. PG&E is also participating in and sharing information with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on its efforts to improve communications resiliency during disasters.

To that end, PG&E appreciates the leadership and attention of you and Congressman McNerney to complement and support these joint resilience coordination efforts in H.R. 5926. Specifically, PG&E appreciates the inclusion in Section 4 of holistic data-sharing provisions which would enhance information sharing and enable more effective and prioritized restoration of critical infrastructure and facilities, while keeping these customers' privacy and confidentiality protections in place.

More broadly, PG&E believes the efforts that you have undertaken in the Committee to improve our nation's resilience in the face of increasing, climate-driven threats are a positive step forward. Emergency preparedness and resilience are national priorities that will require action from all sectors of the economy and all levels of government. PG&E is focused on improving the resilience of its energy system and the communities and customers it serves to the increasing threats experienced in California, most notably wildfires. PG&E looks forward to continuing our efforts – and working with Congress to further address these important issues – as we strive to operate the safest and most reliable electric system in the nation.

Thank you for your support and leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jm C Hogle', written in a cursive style.

Jessica Hogle

cc: Congressman Jerry McNerney (CA-09)