



A Mississippi Nonprofit Corporation

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Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, Southwest
Washington, DC 20554

May 27, 2011

Re: AT&T's proposed merger with T-Mobile, under review in the 11-65 Docket

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing in support of the proposed merger between AT&T and T-Mobile.

As the Executive Director of the Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities I am all too familiar with the challenges many of our consumers, families, neighbors and co-workers with disabilities face daily.

It is no secret that Mississippi, in spite of impressive gains over the past decade, remains one of America's most rural states and has among the lowest per-capita income.

This is important to the conversation surrounding the merger because we depend so heavily upon communications and technology to maximize the use of our existing programs and spread them across our state.

We know that the internet allows people with disabilities access to information, trainings through webinars, and contact with other individuals with disabilities for peer support, education opportunities, and employment.

Because of Mississippi's rural landscape, wired broadband is generally limited to the cities and larger towns. People who live outside those areas have been limited to antiquated services like dial-up, putting them 15 years behind their more urban neighbors.

For people with disabilities, the ability to work at home full-time, or split their time between home and a workplace, is very often the difference between being able to get (and hold) a job, and being wholly dependent on the state and/or their family for support.

A wireless connection at home is, for many Mississippians, their only choice of broadband access and it requires a strong and stable network provider – one which has the ability to design, invest in, and maintain access to rural areas.

Using modern computers and applications specifically designed for people with disabilities, they are able to successfully compete in the workplace which is a benefit to themselves, their families and society in general.

Sharing the latest systems and methods among our citizens with disabilities is only possible over the internet and then only feasible with a broadband connection.

In addition to career opportunities, increased access to wireless broadband enables new telemedicine opportunities and programs to facilitate providing home and community-based services for the elderly and disabled. This is vitally important to my organization and my members and increasing access is necessary as a healthcare concern.

The motto of the Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities is "Opening Doors Together." The merger of AT&T and T-Mobile will allow Mississippians with disabilities to travel through a technological door giving them access to the world of work, education, information, and entertainment while providing them with essential telemedicine opportunities.

Please approve this merger.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Troupe".

Mary Troupe

Executive Director

Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities – 2 Old River Place, Suite A, Jackson, MS 39202