



January 8, 2019

EX PARTE PRESENTATION

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Applications of T-Mobile US, Inc. and Sprint Corporation for Consent to Transfer
Control of Licenses and Authorizations, WT Docket No. 18-197

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Pursuant to Section 1.1206 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206, the 4Competition Coalition submits this letter and attached press release announcing the following new members: United Wireless Communications, Indigo Wireless, the Wireless Internet Service Providers Association, the American Antitrust Institute, and Demand Progress Education Fund. The 4Competition Coalition membership now includes a diverse array of 18 concerned companies, consumer organizations, labor unions, and industry associations that have come together to tell policymakers that the Sprint/T-Mobile merger as currently proposed must be blocked.

/s/
4Competition Coalition

Enclosure

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 7, 2019

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Five new organizations join 4Competition Coalition

Rural wireless companies and trade group join growing chorus of skeptics about T-Mobile's empty promises to serve rural America

Washington, D.C., January 7, 2019 – Two rural wireless carriers and the association representing wireless internet providers today joined the 4Competition Coalition, an alliance of concerned companies, public interest groups, labor unions and industry associations speaking out against the Sprint/T-Mobile merger.

Kansas-based United Wireless Communications and Pennsylvania-based Indigo Wireless announced their opposition to the merger, as did the Wireless Internet Service Providers Association, whose more than a thousand members supply wireless internet access to over 4 million Americans, predominantly in rural areas. The American Antitrust Institute and Demand Progress Education Fund also joined the coalition, highlighting the diverse roster of organizations and companies opposed to the deal.

“As part of a rural telephone cooperative that has worked tirelessly for decades to bring affordable communication services to southwestern Kansas, we are concerned about the negative impacts this merger will have on mobile services in our region,” said Todd Houseman, CEO of United Wireless Communications. “Like many rural wireless carriers, we have a long history of mutually beneficial roaming agreements with Sprint that ensure our customers’ phones work away from home. But the loss of Sprint as a partner would likely mean higher prices for rural consumers – especially because T-Mobile won’t commit to maintaining these reasonable partnerships. The truth is this deal does nothing to help many rural Americans.”

“Sprint and T-Mobile argue the deal will improve service in rural areas, but their rationale doesn’t make sense,” said Dave Tews, President of Indigo Wireless. “By limiting the number of nationwide carriers, this deal would reduce the number of partners that rural wireless carriers can buy network capacity from, giving the new T-Mobile the incentive and ability to raise wholesale prices and hurt rural consumers, like those Indigo serves in northern Pennsylvania.”

“No matter how you slice it, this merger is a bad deal for rural Americans,” said Claude Aiken, President and CEO of the Wireless Internet Service Providers Association. “T-Mobile claims that Sprint’s vast holding of 2.5 GHz spectrum will help them increase coverage, but in the past T-Mobile’s buildout focus has largely been on populated urban

areas. There are no assurances that rural Americans will ever see benefits from this merger.”

“The Sprint-T-Mobile deal would reduce the number of wireless rivals from four to three, stoking even higher concentration in the national U.S. wireless market,” said Diana Moss, president of the American Antitrust Institute. “With little to no merger-specific or verifiable benefits, consumers will likely see higher prices, less choice, lower quality, and slower innovation. As the wave of mega-mergers continues in the U.S., it is increasingly important for competition, consumer, and worker advocacy organizations to join forces in highlighting the potential harms of consolidation.”

“Not only would this deal reduce competition and mean higher wireless prices across the board, letting these two companies combine into one mega-carrier would be particularly harmful to low-income consumers and communities of color,” said Carli Stevenson, Campaigner at Demand Progress Education Fund.

These new members join current coalition participants C Spire, the Rural Wireless Association and NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association in the growing chorus of entities speaking out against the proposed deal’s harms to rural consumers. Those issues include higher prices, fewer choices, and reduced quality of service for Americans across the country.

Since its formation in December, coalition members have continued to make the case to regulators that the merger presents a broad array of harms to consumers in every market across the country, including higher prices and fewer choices.

For more information, please visit: www.4competition.org. The coalition’s current membership of 18 is composed of: AFL-CIO, The American Antitrust Institute, Common Cause, C Spire, CWA-Union, Demand Progress Education Fund, DISH Network, Fight for the Future, The Greenlining Institute, Indigo Wireless, New America’s Open Technology Institute, NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association, Open Markets Institute, Public Knowledge, the Rural Wireless Association, United Wireless Communications, the Wireless Internet Service Providers Association, and Writers Guild of America West.

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