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Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

Barry J. Hobbins
PUBLIC ADVOCATE

September 7, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

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

Re: Applications of T-Mobile US, Inc. and Sprint Corporation, WT Docket No. 18-197

Dear Ms. Dortch,

Consistent with section 1.1206 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206, the Maine Office of the Public Advocate submits the attached material as Attachment 1 in support of the proposed transfer of control of Sprint Corporation to T-Mobile US, Inc.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barry J. Hobbins".

Barry J. Hobbins
Public Advocate

Attachment 1

cc: (via email)
Chairman Ajit Pai
Commissioner Michael O'Rielly
Commissioner Brendan Carr
Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel

Attachment 1

Bangor Daily News

T-Mobile Merger Could Be A Gamechanger For Broadband Connectivity

By Barry Hobbins

Published August 27, 2018

When I first walked into the Maine State House as a young legislator, I knew my mission: advance the livelihoods of Mainers. Even after 25 years in the Legislature as a representative and senator, my mission has remained the same.

Today, as Maine's public advocate, and as a former private attorney with extensive telecommunications experience, I believe the proposed T-Mobile-Sprint merger will be beneficial for Maine consumers and our economy.

Though I did not represent T-Mobile or Sprint while in private practice, I have been following the proposed merger since it was announced in April. I was interested in how this merger would impact consumers, jobs and rural communities. Having scrutinized numerous deals and mergers, I believe that this one has numerous benefits for Maine and the whole country.

Since first launching its "Un-carrier" initiative in March 2013, T-Mobile has led the industry in competitive pricing, notably putting an end to two-year wireless contracts, which all major U.S. carriers abandoned by 2016. In addition, T-Mobile has had all-inclusive pricing (no hidden fees or taxes), unlimited video streaming and the ability to use your smartphone as a mobile data hotspot without paying extra. All these benefits have been great for consumers.

Not only has T-Mobile been good to Maine consumers, but it also has been good to Maine workers. For more than 13 years, T-Mobile's Oakland call center has served as the economic heart of the town and region, providing good-paying jobs to its nearly 800 employees, making it one of the largest private employers in the Kennebec County. It is no surprise that T-Mobile's Oakland call center has been repeatedly rated as one of the best places to work in Maine.

The new T-Mobile promises to create new jobs from day one by opening 600 additional retail locations and up to five more call centers across the U.S., specifically in rural areas and small towns to better serve those communities.

The new T-Mobile will also make sure that rural Mainers can stay connected and have affordable broadband options. Maine currently trails behind the rest of the nation in broadband availability and speed, coming in 49th nationally. While 65 percent of homes in America have access to high-speed internet, only 10 percent of Maine homes have high-speed broadband connections. The T-Mobile-Sprint merger can change that.

I am very encouraged that the combined company will invest nearly \$40 billion in just its first three years to bring the U.S. into the 5G future with fiber-like data speeds. The new T-Mobile will increase wireless and broadband coverage to reach nearly 60 million rural residents, all with

Attachment 1

improved signal quality, reliability and capacity to enable data intensive services at even faster speeds.

While coverage is critical, ensuring Maine consumers have affordable broadband choices is also important. T-Mobile's Metro-PCS brand currently offers plans as low as \$30 per month on the T-Mobile network, and T-Mobile's plans aren't much more. In the future, with 5G, T-Mobile's network will experience broadband speeds 15 times faster than current broadband speeds. With speeds like that, consumers will have more choice and competition in the marketplace.

The new T-Mobile will bring us the first nationwide 5G network, modernize our economy, expand rural access, and provide affordable broadband options to Mainers. As Maine's public advocate, I support this merger so the new T-Mobile can bring us into the 5G future and benefit consumers in Maine and across the country.

Barry Hobbins is Maine's public advocate. He served in the Maine Senate from 1988-1990 and 2004-2012, and in the Maine House of Representatives from 1972-1984 and 2012-2016. While in the Maine Senate, Hobbins was the chair of the Judiciary Committee from 2004-2008 and chair of the Energy, Utility, Technology Committee from 2008-2012. He was the House chair of the Energy, Utility, Technology Committee from 2012-2016.