



**COLORADO FARM BUREAU**  
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September 10, 2014

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Merger of AT&T and DirecTV

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing you today on behalf of Colorado Farm Bureau. Colorado Farm Bureau is the largest agriculture grassroots organization in Colorado and is comprised of livestock and commodity in rural areas throughout the state.

Agriculture is the second largest industry in Colorado and Colorado Farm Bureau is a leader in providing rural Colorado with continuous representation at the local, state and federal level where we seek to enhance marketing opportunities and protect the rural lifestyle. It is because of our priority to support rural Colorado that we come before you today in support efforts to enhance the deployment of broadband into rural Colorado.

Providing broadband in rural, unserved areas of the state is essential in creating opportunities for education, healthcare and business growth, but more often than not, putting in the equipment that provides these services is harder than it should be. With some of the equipment needed for rural broadband already in place via DirecTV, the merger between AT&T and DirecTV should receive serious, positive consideration.

According to information we have received, the combined company will bring new and better high-speed broadband options to millions more Americans, the majority of them in rural areas. This is something that rural Colorado desperately needs. Customers in many of these locations will, for the first time, receive the type of internet service that people in other areas take for granted. This in turn will allow for creating new opportunities.

There exist locations within the United States that have no access to terrestrial broadband services today. As stated above, by not having access to broadband, these areas face serious challenges. Furthermore, much of the risk management done by farmers and ranchers today is internet based. The United States Department of Agriculture has forms for risk management

programs that take hours to download over dial up. If farmers and ranchers cannot get forms from the U.S. government in a timely manner, what hope do they have in creating new business opportunities!

Agriculture has seen and dealt with mergers that overpromised and under delivered. While we reserve judgment on the quality of service that could be potentially be received by a merger of AT&T and DirecTV, we are supportive of this merger. Rural America is chronically underserved in regards to broadband access. Effort to expand broadband to rural areas should be strongly considered for approval.

Broadband is imperative for the success of rural Colorado so we can tap into health care, educational, and government services, as well as new business opportunities. This merger is a step in the right direction for getting a broadband network into unserved area of our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chad Vorthmann". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "C" and a long, sweeping tail.

Chad Vorthmann- Executive Vice President