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Minnesota Legislative Board

A Division of SMART, Sheet metal, Air, Rail and Transit Union
Printed In House

October 10, 2014

Federal Communications Commission
455 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of the United Transportation Union, Sheet metal, Air, Rail and Transit Union, Minnesota Legislative Board, (UTU-SMART-TD), I write in support of the proposed merger between Direct TV and AT&T. We believe the merger is good for American consumers and telecommunication workers alike.

UTU-SMART-TD represents 1200 transportation workers in Minnesota. While our rail industry has consolidated over several decades, it is no longer isolated now competing with trucks, barge, and pipelines for the movement of goods and commodities. Our industry and the broader American economy has benefited from competition and our stabile, dependable, and unionized workforce.

Similarly, AT&T is no longer just competing in the cellular phone market but now faces a consolidating telecommunications industry including cable companies, traditional phone line providers and streaming video options for people's telecommunication dollars. As such, a merger between two historically dissimilar companies, AT&T and Direct TV, will enable both to compete better in a larger market. The benefit from well-trained and dependable workers will be invaluable.

As a common carrier and private sector union, we are always supportive of efforts to ensure strong wages and benefits to other service sector workers. The fact that AT&T respects the rights of workers to unionize is consistent with common carrier service responsibilities. It is essential that America keep good-paying jobs to ensure a strong middle class. Not only do we look forward to the Communication Workers of America gaining 10,000 new members, we believe the benefits from an organized workforce can positively impact telecommunication workers worldwide.

Thank you for review of our State Committee comments in support of the AT&T and Direct TV merger. Please contact us if we can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P. J. Qualy", is written over the typed name.

P. J. Qualy
Minnesota Legislative Director
United Transportation Union-SMART-TD

cc: Mr. Joseph Nigro, SMART General President
Mr. John Previsich, UTU-SMART-TD President
Mr. John Risch, UTU-SMART-TD National Legislative Director
UTU-SMART-TD Minnesota general membership.