

CALIFORNIA  
RANGELAND  
*Trust*



October 15, 2014

The Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Sir or Madam:

Given the economic importance that agriculture and ranching have for California's economy, the undersigned organizations would like to express our strong support of the Commission's efforts to promote greater broadband access in small towns and rural areas. Specifically, to help attain this goal, we ask the Commission to approve AT&T's proposed acquisition of DirecTV.

For the Commission to appreciate our concern with this issue, it must understand the scope of farming and ranching in California. Our state has more than 100 million acres of land. About 38 million acres of these are range and pasture lands, of which approximately half are owned by the federal government. According to statistics put out by the California Department of Food and Agriculture, California is home to more than 80,000 farms and ranches. The vast majority of these - more than 90% -- are family-owned businesses, and together they account for about one out of every nine dollars in cash farm receipts.

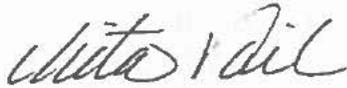
Our state's massive size should give the Commission some understanding of the geographic challenges inherent in trying to expand high-speed broadband service throughout the state. AT&T and DirecTV have promised to help achieve this goal by expanding new, high-speed Internet service to many locations across California if their merger is approved. Given the above described size and significance of California's farm industry, the benefits to the farm and ranch communities could be substantial.

The Commission should also appreciate the direct connection between better broadband service and economic opportunity for Californians living or working on farms and ranches. California farmers and ranchers are often at a disadvantage due to the high cost of doing business in this state. Improved broadband access can help them become more productive and efficient, engage in sustainable practices that help the environment, and monitor price changes.

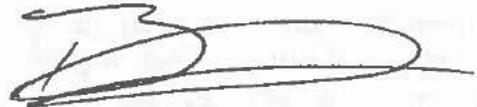
High-speed Internet service also facilitates access to crop protection materials and improved direct marketing of products. More and better high-speed service also opens options for enhancing career technical education so that California continues to have the workforce necessary to carry out the increasingly technical jobs associated with agricultural production.

The expanded deployment of modern, high-capacity Internet service promised by AT&T and DirecTV, if their merger is approved, would be a tremendous benefit for the farming and ranching communities and all those associated with them. We ask the Commission to approve this merger.

Sincerely,



Nita Vail  
Chief Executive Officer  
California Rangeland Trust



Billy Gatlin  
Executive Vice President  
California Cattlemen's Association