



South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation
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October 13, 2014

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

Dear Ms. Dortch:

With more than 100,000 members, the South Carolina Farm Bureau (SCFB) is dedicated to connecting farmers to the larger community. Our mission is to cultivate understanding about agriculture's importance to our local economies. A critical piece of that is expanding the public's knowledge of who, where, and how food grows. We also work to empower our member to make informed choices so that they become better, more productive farmers.

The Commission should recognize that for each of SCFB's goals, high-speed Internet technology brings tremendous value. The ability to maintain real-time video and other data-heavy connections is extremely helpful for farmers seeking to stay current on farming news, engage in sustainable farming practices, participate in auctions, and monitor weather patterns.

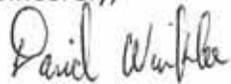
The SCFB extends its endorsement of the proposal by AT&T and DirecTV to merge their operations into a single company. These companies have indicated that they will make deployment of modern, high-capacity Internet service a priority to customer locations across South Carolina, many of which are in small towns and rural areas. It is hard to overstate the importance of this investment in broadband. The Commission should appreciate that real-time information is just as important for a family farmer as it is for a businessman in Charleston.

Faster, more accessible high-speed Internet service would accomplish more than just an improvement in the productivity of South Carolina's farms. According to the South Carolina Department of Agriculture, our state's farm families return approximately 80% of every dollar earned back into the state's economy. The resulting Internet deployment of an approved AT&T-DirecTV merger would offer a significant economic boost throughout this state.

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The SCFB appreciates your attention to our letter and we urge the Commission to support the AT&T-DirectTV merger.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Winkles".

David M. Winkles, Jr.
President
South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation