



**WKRCRA**

West Kentucky Regional Chamber Alliance

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*United We Stand*

October 15, 2014

**Ballard**  
▪  
**Caldwell**  
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**Calloway**  
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**Carlisle**  
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**Crittenden**  
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**Christian**  
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**Fulton**  
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**Graves**  
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**Hickman**  
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**Livingston**  
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**Lyon**  
▪  
**McCracken**  
▪  
**Marshall**  
▪  
**Trigg**

Ms. Marlene Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: Expansion of broadband services in Kentucky**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The West Kentucky Regional Chamber Alliance supports any such action that will expand access to broadband services in Kentucky, including the proposed merger between AT&T and DIRECTV.

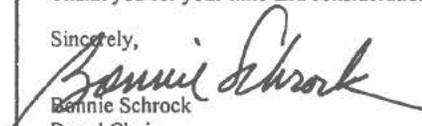
Infrastructure is critical to economic development, and in western Kentucky we are well aware that good infrastructure helps our communities thrive and our economies grow. Historically, *infrastructure* has referred to roads and bridges, which are certainly essential for growth. In fact, one of our priority projects in western Kentucky has been the development of Interstate 69, a vital transportation project that, after a long struggle, has just now become a reality. However, the Internet has transformed the way we live, and, likewise, we have had to transform how we think about infrastructure. Broadband infrastructure is vital to future economic growth and quality of life in every community across the country.

Businesses of any size can use it to enter new markets and to compete alongside companies from all over the world, and individuals from all walks of life can use it to access training or educational opportunities, telework jobs, and, of course, entertainment options and informational resources. Right now, many households and communities throughout Kentucky lack access to high-speed Internet service. This prevents these Kentuckians from accessing many opportunities for growth and enhanced quality of life. In addition, it hinders growth, innovation, and development for many of our most essential industries, including agriculture, tourism, retail, health care, and manufacturing.

We waited for I-69 and for the key benefits it brings to our region for a long time. We can't afford to wait like that for access to advanced network infrastructure, which delivers the speeds and bandwidth necessary to remain competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. That's why we're pleased to support those actions which will expand access to networks that stretch to rural regions and small communities across the country and across Kentucky.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Bonnie Schrock  
Board Chair