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Ohio Consumers' Counsel

Robert S. Tongren
Consumers' Counsel

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

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April 30, 1999

CC DKT NO. 98-141

Chairman William E. Kennard
Federal Communications Commission
Room 8B201
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: SBC and Ameritech Merger

Dear Chairman Kennard,

In my May 26, 1998 letter to you, I expressed concerns that the proposed merger between SBC and Ameritech would hamper the introduction of competition and the benefits that residential customers might realize from such competition.

It was this concern and my frustration with the lack of competition for residential consumers that was the focus of our efforts in the Ohio merger proceeding. As you are aware, the Ohio Public Utilities Commission approved a settlement in the SBC/Ameritech merger proceeding. I support this settlement since it provides an opportunity to advance competition for residential customers. The essential elements that provide this opportunity are discounts to unbundled local loops and increased discounts for resold services.

I continue to urge you and your fellow commissioners to keep residential customers and the benefits that residential consumers should be receiving from competition a priority as you determine the public interest in this proceeding. Conditions for FCC approval must advance and safeguard the interests of residential consumers. This is especially important since these customers do not have a competitive choice in their local telephone

77 S. High St., 15th Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43266-0550
614-466-8574/1-800-282-9448 (Ohio only)
Fax 614-466-9475
Internet Address: <http://www.state.oh.us/cons/>

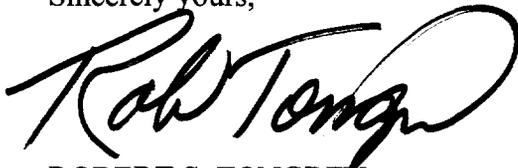
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service provider. The proposed merger presents a unique opportunity to advance competition for residential customers. We urge you to take advantage of this opportunity.

Please feel free to contact me at 614-466-8574 if you have any comments or questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Tongren". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

ROBERT S. TONGREN
Ohio Consumers' Counsel

RST/KJH

cc: Commissioner Ness
Commissioner Furchtgott-Roth
Commissioner Powell
Commissioner Tristani