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**To:** K3DOM.K3PO2(WDEVER)  
**Date:** Tue, Sep 14, 1999 12:42 AM  
**Subject:** Docket 98-141

**ORIGINAL**

98-141

Dear Mr. Dever,

Up until August 1, 1999 I was the CEO of an Internet Service Provider in Ann Arbor, Michigan. At that time, Ameritech forced us out of business.

They will try to tell you they do not hold a monopoly in SE Michigan...they will tell you that MCI, AT&T, Level 3, LDMI, and others also offer local service...but the truth is, they all do nothing more than resell Ameritech services.

It is enough of an issue that Ameritech controls Telco services and disallows competition in the local phone service arena, but they go completely unchecked in the Internet arena. Already having forced out of business several other ISP's, Ameritech has conveniently created a new division where they form a concentration camp (a special division) for all their competitors, where we are herded together and targeted one by one.

Think about this...if they continue to go unchecked, and gain only 1% of every ISP they put under, it won't take long before they monopolize the Internet industry as well.

In allowing the merger with SB, you will give them greater power and positioning on a far greater global scale to continue this effort. Not only do I feel this is a very bad decision, but a disastrous move for the future of the Internet.

Of the 7500+- ISP's in the US today, how many of them have you talked to? I mean REALLY talked to...and asked how being forced to purchase services from a monopolistic competitor affects their business? You can't just talk to the handful of major ISP's, such as Mindspring or AOL...you need to talk to the folks who are pioneers...who set out for that American dream of owning their own business...you are missing the largest group of employers in the Internet industry...the masses of businesses that will be affected by your decisions to allow the merger to go through.

Remember, Ameritech has not fulfilled it's obligation yet to open up it's controlled areas in SE Michigan...their lobbyists talk a good game, but you don't need to dig too deep to find the shallowness of their talk.

It isn't right that they can go uncontrolled...that they can force out businesses who compete against them. By allowing a merger which will more than double their size, you allow that monopoly to grow larger still.

Our only recourse was to file a lawsuit in court, as well as a formal hearing with the Public Service Commission after 3-1/2 years of battling them. But, the final victory was theirs...before our day in court, they forced us out of business and gained more than 5% of our customers.

I do hope you will ask questions...and lots of them. I hope you will table the approval of the merger pending further investigation of other issues that should require serious consideration.

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