



THE SENIORS COALITION

Working for a Responsible America

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July 20, 2005

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., SW, TW-B204
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Applications for Consent to Transfer Control of Filed by Verizon Communications, Inc., and MCI, Inc., Docket No. 05-75

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The Seniors Coalition, which represents the interests and concerns of over four million of America's senior citizens at both the state and federal levels (and we believe the millions of seniors who may not be a member of our organization, but who share common interests with our members), strongly supports Verizon Communication's merger with MCI, Inc. It is The Senior Coalition's mission to protect the quality of life and retirement security that older Americans have earned while supporting common sense solutions to the challenges of the future.

One of The Seniors Coalition's key legislative goals for 2005 includes "promoting a responsible telecommunications policy that assures access by seniors to emerging technologies, that protects American jobs, and preserves the competitiveness of American companies in global markets." We strongly believe the Verizon-MCI merger fits squarely under that objective.

The Seniors Coalition has always strongly encouraged the FCC to act in the name of increased competition. Telecommunications competition is a cornerstone to ensuring low rates and increases in innovation.

Verizon's pledge to invest \$2 billion in MCI's network will spur competition, advance innovation, and ensure that consumers can access new services and technologies. As senior citizens, our members have witnessed countless transformations in the telecommunications marketplace. They remember when placing a long distance call was a big deal because it was so expensive, and they remember the days when their only choice in phone service was the local phone company.

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Marlene H. Dortch

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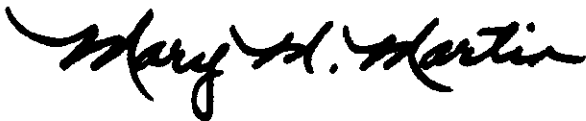
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We've left those days far behind. Competition among new providers, coupled with new technologies like wireless and Voice over Internet protocol, are driving down prices and providing consumers with more options than we ever thought possible. The Verizon-MCI merger will only add to that mix and bring American consumers more options.

An increasing number of today's senior citizens are jumping online and are eager to take advantage of the new, exciting services the combined Verizon-MCI will be able to offer. With families often spread out across the country, senior citizens are increasingly relying on telecommunications services to keep in touch. They send e-mail messages and look at pictures of their grandchildren and great grandchildren online. Seniors are also looking up healthcare information, corresponding with their doctors, and shopping online. In fact, it has been estimated that eight in ten Internet users have gone online to look up a health-related topic.

By quickly approving this merger application, the FCC will help stimulate further development in telecommunications and usher in a new age of services and products. The telecommunications industry is changing at a lightening pace, and this merger will help us move forward more rapidly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mary M. Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M".

Mary M. Martin
Chairman