

Dear Chairman Martin:

I am writing to express my opposition to the Comcast/Time Warner/Adelphia merger (FCC Docket No. 05-192) and the AT&T/BellSouth merger (FCC Docket No. 06-74). Neither the consumers, the employees, and ultimately the stockholders are served by these mega-mergers. They provide little or no value but they are serving to bring us ever closer to monopoly in the telecommunications industry and could result in limiting free speech over the internet.

The concentration of media power is a growing problem in this country. Though we have more channels available than ever before, they are increasingly falling under the control of a handful of giant corporations. The cost of broadband service also remains out of reach for many households. Americans are hungry for more competition in services. However, these mergers will only starve Americans of this needed competition.

Allowing AT&T to combine with BellSouth will give the top three broadband providers control of over half of all broadband connections in the country. At the same time, the Time Warner/Comcast/Adelphia merger will give Comcast and Time Warner increased power over entire regions of the United States, allowing rates to rise even as the digital divide continues to grow.

In the event that the mergers are allowed to go through, restrictions should be built into the agreements that ensure the protection of the consumers from the near-monopoly power that these huge corporations bring to the table. With that in mind, the FCC should require that consumers 1) have access to competitive ISPs, 2) can purchase broadband service at a fair price on a stand-alone basis, 3) can utilize their own equipment to connect to the network, and 4) should not be required to purchase programming - through bundling - that they do not want. Furthermore, space needs to be reserved on cable networks for regional and public access.

In conclusion, I ask the FCC to consider the interests of the people like me who pay the cable, telephone and broadband bills and watch the programming. Many of us already have enough trouble trying to afford broadband or cable TV. Please don't make it even harder for us to find competitors, or make it easier for Comcast, Time Warner and AT&T to raise prices or block local and independent voices.