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October 23, 2006

To:

Chairman Kevin Martin  
Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate  
Commissioner Michael Copps  
Commissioner Robert McDowell  
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein  
Federal Communications Commission  
The Portals  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 06-74, Support for AT&T BellSouth Merger

Dear Commissioners:

I am the President/CEO of the Kentucky Association for Economic Development (KAED), a private, non-profit association representing the economic development profession in Kentucky. I am writing to encourage your approval of the BellSouth / AT&T merger.

One of the key factors to economic growth today, especially in rural areas, is the availability of broadband internet access. This access is no longer considered a luxury by the business community – it is a necessity for competing in the global economy, and in many instances, may be the only way many rural communities can play a role in economic development.

The proposed AT&T / BellSouth merger could be the catalyst for dynamic economic change in Kentucky. It is my understanding that as a proposed condition of the merger, AT&T and BellSouth have committed to deliver affordable and universal access to broadband, including:

- ☑ A new residential broadband offering set at \$10 per month, affording many rural communities a viable alternative to dial access;
- ☑ A pledge to provide broadband Internet access to *all* residential living units in the AT&T / BellSouth service area, providing economic developers a necessary tool to recruit new economic development prospects to our rural communities.

The merger of AT&T and BellSouth, two companies synonymous with quality, will significantly enhance the economic viability of Kentucky communities. I ask you to approve the AT&T / BellSouth merger without further delay.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Mangeot  
President/CEO

cc: Marlene Dortch, Commission Secretary