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October 25, 2006

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

Dear Commissioners:

I write today to encourage the Commission's prompt consideration of the AT&T-BellSouth merger. The State of Florida is home to more than 13,000 employees and approximately five million customers in the BellSouth footprint. I strongly urge you to move quickly in deciding the merits of this merger.

As you know, few sectors of our economy are as dynamic as the telecommunications sector. The State of Florida acted as early as 1995 to create the opportunity for new players to enter the markets and for existing players to adapt to the changing competitive environment. This environment has been to the benefit of Floridians as well as the consumers throughout the country.

I believe you have before you the commitments that AT&T and BellSouth have made concerning disaster recovery and competition in video markets. I also understand that the proposed AT&T-BellSouth merger has the potential to provide new benefits for consumers. From the filing made at the FCC, AT&T and BellSouth have discussed with the Commission an offer of \$10 broadband access to all customers within the new footprint, a free upgrade to DSL for any current AT&T-BellSouth customer using dial-up service, and a "stand-alone" DSL service to customers at a competitive rate, thereby no longer requiring customers to also purchase voice service. Most importantly, AT&T-BellSouth has made a commitment to deploy high-speed internet service to rural areas and lower-income living units.

For nearly eight years, I have challenged Florida businesses and our state agencies to work toward closing the digital divide for the benefit of all Floridians. I would therefore encourage you to work diligently to make a decision on this merger on or prior to your schedule of November 3, 2006. The offerings before you appear to be consumer focused and contribute toward what I trust is a shared goal of leveraging competition and technology for economic and social growth.

Sincerely,

Jeb Bush

cc: Marlene Dortch,
FCC Secretary

