



ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

**NELEA**

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FCC Mail Room

October 22, 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

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

Dear Commissioners:

As an economic development professional, I am writing to urge expeditious approval of the BellSouth / AT&T merger. I know the factors, from infrastructure to workforce, that set communities apart and poise them for economic growth. This merger will address one of the most critical needs required of any community seeking to grow its economy and new jobs – ubiquitous broadband Internet access.

The proposed AT&T / BellSouth merger could be the catalyst for dynamic economic change in our rural communities, especially. 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.

Without this now vital access, our rural communities are cut off from the opportunities to expand their businesses and these communities lack the economic appeal necessary to attract start-up

W. C. BOYD, JR. 09/1  
WASBONE

businesses or attract expanding businesses to the area. The lack of services further hamper business's access to goods and services now so easily afforded to areas of widespread internet services.

The merger of these great American companies will significantly enhance the economic viability of the communities we serve. I ask you to approve the AT&T / BellSouth merger without further delay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tana Trichel", written in a cursive style.

Tana Trichel  
President/CEO  
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[ttrichel@nelea.us](mailto:ttrichel@nelea.us)

cc: Marlene Dortch, Commission Secretary  
cc: Board of Directors, Northeast Louisiana Economic Alliance