

December 14, 2006

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

Commissioner Jonathan
Commissioner Robert

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

Dear FCC Chairman and Commissioners:

The Black Business Association of Mississippi urges you to vote on the merger of AT&T and BellSouth. While we wrote once before, we thought it appropriate to do so again, after three postponed votes at the FCC.

For the sake of the businesses and consumers in Mississippi who need better access to telecommunications, we ask you to find a way around the impasse and approve this deal.

It is difficult enough in a competitive market to succeed in business. As African Americans, there are even more struggles and obstacles to overcome. When business owners are forced to work without broadband connections and the technology that facilitates success in other parts of the country, those of us in rural communities throughout Mississippi find the deck stacked against us. The longer this continues, the more difficult it becomes.

However, with the hope of better telecommunications from a merged AT&T-BellSouth company, we foresee an easier road to competition – one on par with our big-city competitors. If we are to achieve economic success, removing the technological roadblock will be an imperative and urgent step to make.

Please help us do so, by permitting AT&T and BellSouth to merge and provide better service to us all.

Sincerely,

James O. Ford

President, Black Business Association of Mississippi