



Latin American Chamber of Commerce

December 19, 2006 124 East Independence Blvd. Charlotte, NC 28204, - ph: 704-343-2525 - fax: 704-343-0245

Chairman Kevin Martin laccc Charlotte@gmail.com - www.lacc Charlotte.org

Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate

Commissioner Michael Copps

Commissioner Robert McDowell

Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein

Federal Communications Commission

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The Portals

445 12th Street, SW

Washington, DC 20554

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

Dear Commissioners:

The Latin American Chamber of Charlotte (LACCC) was asked to express a position regarding the pending AT&T/Bell South merger a few months ago. We understand that the issue has been sent for review again, we would like to reiterate our position on this matter and would appreciate your commission considering our statement.

1. THE MISSION OF THE LACCC is to preserve and promote existing Latin American businesses, encourage new Latin American businesses, and to act as an advocate for the Latin American business community.

2. THE LACCC AS A MEMBER OF THE USHCC

The LACCC operates under the umbrella of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC); the USHCC is the nation's largest and most influential advocate for more than 2 million Hispanic-owned in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. The USHCC actively promotes the economic growth and development of Hispanic business leaders and entrepreneurs and reaching Hispanic communities in every market across the country. The USHCC has issued a position in their Legislative Agenda regarding the Rewriting of the nation's telecommunication law as follows:

"The United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) supports congressional efforts that will create economic opportunities in the telecommunications industry through the rewrite of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. We believe that such efforts should

remove artificial barriers to increase competition among all telecommunication companies.

be guided by a set of principles that increases technological competition while ensuring that small businesses and underserved populations have access to these new technologies”

The LACCC agrees with the USHCC that any rewrite proposal must increase competition, so that new technologies are available at an affordable price for all consumers. Congress has an opportunity to remove artificial barriers to increase competition among all telecommunication companies.

### 3. CONNECTIONS TO THE LATIN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Latin American-Owned Small Businesses are one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy. Latinos are an important and fast-growing segment of North Carolina’s population and economy. Additionally, Latinos are increasingly dependent upon advanced broadband technologies to grow their businesses, educate themselves and their children and communicate with family and friends, near and far. To ensure advancement of broadband technologies to the Latino community, the Latin American Chamber of Commerce of Charlotte, North Carolina supports all efforts to bring affordable telecommunication services to our communities and to ensure that small businesses have access to innovative technologies and can participate effectively in their development.

#### **OUR POSITION**

**The LACC encourages approval of the merger of BellSouth and AT&T. The merger as presented promises to bring about affordable and universal broadband access for all citizens of North Carolina, including those in low income and rural areas.**

**We encourage the telecommunications industry in general to ensure that any build-up investment in current and future technology infrastructure includes procurement opportunities for qualified Hispanic businesses.**

**We ask the Commission to consider approval of the merger of AT&T and BellSouth as part of a larger effort so that Hispanic Americans and the community at large can soon benefit from the promise of affordable and widespread broadband technology.**

For the Board of Directors of the Latin American Chamber of Commerce

Francisco Alvarado  
Chair

Lucia Zapata Griffith  
Chair

Legislative Committee Board of Directors

c.c. Legislative Committee files