

Howell Petroleum Products

317a Halsey Street
Brooklyn, NY 11216

May 31, 2011

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioners:

I've been advocating for minority and woman-owned businesses for more than 30 years, and I must admit that the potential associated with the proposed merger of T-Mobile and AT&T (Docket 11-65) presents some of the most exciting opportunities for underserved communities. Among the minority business owners I know, there is near unanimous support for this deal and any future telecommunications transactions that would bring the possibilities of expanding access to wireless broadband service and other communications services to fruition.

I see no reason why the government should prevent a perfectly legitimate transaction like this moving forward. This merger could serve as an exemplary model for the industry. As both an African American and an entrepreneur, I support market-based solutions as a way to promote equal opportunity..

Whatever drawbacks may exist with this merger—and I suspect they are few—the potential benefits that the combined companies would offer essentially render other concerns irrelevant. AT&T plans to provide high-speed wireless broadband access to 55 million more people—many of them living in minority communities—than it had scheduled to before this merger was announced. We just can't afford to pass that up.

The mobile aspect of AT&T's network plans is particularly beneficial to minorities, since African Americans and English-speaking Hispanics are among the most active users of the mobile web. These communities view the Internet as an important tool for economic and educational opportunity. It is important to communities of color to have the same access other neighborhoods receive, especially to the technologies that help them the most.

And of course with the coming spectrum crunch, it is critical that we foster private sector strategies to address the problem. Is there any doubt that AT&T's plans to invest \$8 billion over seven years will go a long way toward that end?

This merger represents a tremendous chance to reshape the future, a prospect that may never come along again. It will make the industry more competitive, which will likely result in lower prices, accelerated innovation, and service to everybody. Please make this merger a priority and approve it without hesitation.

Many Thanks,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Howell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Bill Howell, Owner

Howell Industries