



May 31, 2011

The Honorable Julius Genachowski  
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Proceeding 11-65 involving the AT&T merger with T-Mobile

Dear Chairman Genachowski and FCC Commissioners:

We write to you as leaders in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities who have come together to urge support for the AT&T-T-Mobile merger. Ours is a diverse community. LGBT Americans live in every town and city in our nation. During the past generation, we have grown more visible in our communities and have stepped forward to lead in many new areas – business, politics, education, the arts, philanthropy to name only a few.

In short, the LGBT community is a mirror of America's larger society and it is through that prism that we view this proposed merger. What our community wants in wireless phone and Internet service is exactly what Americans in general want: more access, faster service, and competitive pricing. On all three counts, we believe that the facts strongly favor the merger.

First, there is the need to expand access so that each of us can have affordable, effective means of communication. As representatives of communities that historically have felt the sting of discrimination, we are acutely sensitive when certain segments of our nation are not able to participate fully in something that the majority takes for granted. We salute President Obama's vision of an America in which everyone has high-speed access capable of meeting the demands of distance learning and telehealth programs.

From both financial and technological perspectives, the optimal way to reach the President's goal involves dramatically expanding 4G/LTE and 4G/WiMAX options. This takes a significant commitment of capital and it is worth noting that T-Mobile's parent company has never announced plans for 4G/LTE or 4G/WiMAX deployment. AT&T's written pledge to commit up to \$8 billion in new deployment expenditures offers the best, most obvious option to reach the President's goal.

The LGBT community has a longstanding commitment to all forms of social justice. That is why we look at the deployment of faster wireless Internet options not only from financial and technological viewpoints but also in terms of how this improves society. For example, better wireless technology promises new home healthcare options that

improve the lives of those for whom a trip to a doctor's office is a major and expensive effort. Wireless healthcare also promises better monitoring of vital signs and even in-home safety. [With the cost to taxpayers of assisted living at \\$200 a day or more](#), the possibility that new wireless healthcare systems could prolong independent living is a major societal benefit.

We see similar benefits accruing to the arts, as new wireless networks give people newfound abilities to stream videos and enjoy music. At a time when budgets for even the most prominent productions are tight, the expansion of high-speed wireless access holds great promise for those organizations' efforts reach new audiences and supporters. It also gives those viewers an ability to react to the media and the messages being communicated: increasingly our community—like others—is expressing itself through mobile technologies. Improved wireless service means increased participation.

In sum, we believe that the proposed AT&T-T-Mobile merger will serve the public interest in multiple ways. If approved, it will expand the availability of true high-speed access to millions of Americans who do not currently have it. This new deployment also holds the promise of dramatic improvements in healthcare, education, the arts and the overall economy.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter and for keeping in mind the voices in the LGBT community as you consider, and hopefully approve, this merger.

Sincerely,

Jarrett Barrios  
President  
Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD)

Justin Nelson  
President & Co-Founder  
National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC)

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