



## IOWA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND LAND STEWARDSHIP

Bill Northey, Secretary of Agriculture

August 9, 2011

Chairman Julius Genachowski  
 Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
 Commissioner Robert M. McDowell  
 Commissioner Mignon Clyburn

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Received &amp; Inspected

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FCC Mail Room

Federal Communications Commission  
 445 12th Street SW  
 Washington, DC 20554

Re: WT Docket 11-65

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners:

In recent years, the use and expansion of the Internet has dramatically altered how businesses operate, the level of services provided in health care facilities, and the quality of the programs available at our educational institutions. As was the case with the development of the printing press, telegraph, radio, and television, the Internet today is making information far more accessible by connecting people and ideas from all over the world.

While that continues to be true today, the manner in which people are accessing the Internet is changing and changing rapidly. In a 2010 study, Morgan Stanley noted that by 2012 more people will go online using mobile devices than traditional desktop or notebook PCs. This study confirms what we already know; mobile broadband is going to be a central part of our nation's economy in the coming years.

Of course, this trend will have a very direct impact on agriculture in the United States. As a farmer, past president of the National Corn Growers Association, and Iowa's current Secretary of Agriculture, I have spent my professional life advocating for rural communities and the rural economy. Based on those experiences, I believe the merger between AT&T and T-Mobile will provide valuable benefits to farmers and smaller communities

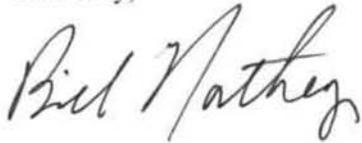
This is a critical issue for farmers. Effective and robust mobile broadband access will help this community with researching market opportunities and new products. Right now, new mobile applications have been developed or are in the process of being developed to help farmers check weather reports, view relevant state and federal regulations, track prices on commodity futures, and diagnose crop diseases. More information and better connectivity will lead to higher quality products and more economic activity in our rural communities.

As a result of the merger and AT&T's commitment to invest \$8 billion to upgrade its wireless infrastructure, 55 million more Americans will gain access to 4G LTE technology. That means 97% of the nation will have access to the very best and highest quality mobile broadband services. In the long-term it will help better position the United States for long-

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At this moment, there's broad agreement that the United States needs to take meaningful steps to expand broadband access. We simply cannot afford to become a nation of haves and have nots when it comes to mobile broadband. If that happens, rural American will suffer. For all these reasons, I hope you will review and approve the merger between AT&T and T-Mobile.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Northey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Bill Northey**  
Iowa Secretary of Agriculture