



GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE OF ILLINOIS

August 22, 2011

Federal Communications Commission
c/o Marlene Dortch, Secretary
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners Baker, Clyburn, Copps, and McDowell:

When most people think of Illinois, they think of Chicago - the Cubs, the Bulls, or the Bears. They forget that the rest of the state is the breadbasket of our country, largely rural and still very much dependent on agriculture and small businesses for its economic output. Our districts are in the northwest part of the state, one of the most rural parts of Illinois.

Currently, many of our constituents do not have access to high-speed wireless broadband. If approved by your commission, the AT&T and T-Mobile merger would change that. As part of the merger agreement, AT&T has pledged to invest an additional \$8 billion in its Fourth Generation network. Those added dollars would enable the company to bring high-speed wireless access to more than 97 percent of Americans, most of them in rural parts of the country, including our districts.

Access to high-speed broadband will improve public safety, educational and health care outcomes in our region. Access to wireless technology means faster response times for police, fire and rescue teams. It means our patients and their medical doctors will have the ability to connect with specialists at top-ranking, urban medical centers via videoconference. And this partnership means our students and workers will be able to participate in distance learning and job training programs that are only available online. Our farmers and small businesses will also be better equipped to sell their products to other parts of the country and world.

Our constituents shouldn't be forgotten. They deserve to have access to this life-improving technology. You can give it to them by approving this merger.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tim Bivins".

Illinois State Senator Tim Bivins

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jim Sacia".

Illinois State Representative Jim Sacia

Jerry Mitchell

Illinois State Representative Jerry Mitchell