

I am writing to express opposition to the proposed acquisition of TWC and Comcast.

As things stand, there is already virtually no competition between Internet providers. Anyone who remembers the situation with Ma Bell should think honestly on the state of the telephone industry at the time and what was done about it. And also note that AT&T has now re-forged Ma Bell from its disparate parts.

The classic response to this problem is that 'the market will provide a better alternative if the people demand it', but this ignores the fact that to survive against these huge companies requires many millions or billions of dollars - something few people have. Why invest \$20M of one's money into a competitive new company when you can invest \$20M into an existing company that dominates its market?

Various elected and appointed officials continue to make statements that imply that the consumer of Internet products has a choice of providers, but this is simply not true. My mother's entire housing development has an exclusive Comcast contract and she is prevented from switching. My best friend's house in a wealthy gated community is similarly locked in. Where I live, AT&T is the only provider for a substantial portion of the street. Across the country this if this merger goes through, even those who have the ability to choose between terrible service from Time Warner or terrible service from Comcast will lose that choice.

Ask yourself why every time Google opens up a new Google Fiber region, prices from AT&T, Comcast and Time Warner plummet and data speeds suddenly increase. None of these companies is interested in providing faster or better service. They are fully aware that consumers have nowhere to go, and so any dissatisfaction we have is decoupled from the ability to speak with our wallets.

It is beyond clear that Internet provision is a natural monopoly and that the companies that control the market have profited massively from their advantages, while delivering consistently subpar service. America invented the Internet, yet we are consistently behind the curve on Internet speed and service quality.

Please do not approve this purchase. These companies already have massive amounts of power over their customers and have repeatedly abused that power to rake in obscene profits while providing nothing but higher prices and ever-worse service in return.