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The proposed Comcast-Time Warner Cable merger would afford the combined company tremendous power over our nations media and communications infrastructure, positioning Comcast as a communications gatekeeper, giving it the power to dictate the future of numerous industries across the Internet, television and telecommunications landscape.

In the last four years, Comcast has raised its basic cable rates in some of its markets by nearly 70 percent. This merger is, at its core, about broadband, the most profitable and fastest-growing segment of the cable industry. Comcast's service area would cover almost two-thirds of the U.S., and it would be the only broadband provider that could deliver truly high-speed Internet and pay-TV services to nearly four out of every 10 U.S. homes. This union would give Comcast control over half of the nation's next-generation broadband customers and more than half of the pay-TV/Internet-bundled subscribers.

The open Internet brings the promise of meaningful competition as it greatly reduces the gatekeeper power that incumbent cable, broadcasting and studio giants like Comcast-NBCUniversal have historically wielded. But this merger--taking place in the vacuum of regulatory oversight of our broadband-communications market--would give Comcast unprecedented control over the Internet. It would also pose a grave threat to media diversity.

In addition, Comcast and Time Warner have abysmal customer service ratings, making a combination of these bad service companies contrary to the public interest. The American Customer Satisfaction Index listed Comcast and Time Warner as the 2nd and 3rd worst customer service companies in the nation. Consumer Reports National Research Center's annual telecommunications service survey, MSN Money-Zogby Analytics' Customer Service Hall of Shame and YouGov's BrandIndex likewise all rank Comcast and Time Warner Cable at the top of the list of worst customer service companies.

Comcast has repeatedly flexed its corporate and political muscles to get what it wants, even if that has meant harming competition, consumers and communities. Around the country Comcast has fought community efforts to bridge the digital divide with municipal broadband networks. It has lobbied statehouses and local governments to undermine public, educational and government access television. It has blocked its customers' Internet traffic. And it was fined for failing to fulfill the commitments it made to secure approval of its merger with NBCUniversal.

The Comcast-Time Warner Cable merger would give Comcast unthinkable gatekeeper power over our commercial, social and civic lives. Everyone from the biggest business to the smallest startup, from elected officials to everyday people, would have to cross through Comcast's gates.

Given these clear and present dangers and the complete lack of any tangible benefits, it's clear that the union of the nation's No. 1 and No. 2 cable companies is not good for competition or in the public interest. We, the undersigned, representing millions of people from every state, urge you to block this merger.