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METRO DC DSA POSITION STATEMENT
ON COMCAST-TWC MERGER AND NET NEUTRALITY RULEMAKING
Adopted by the Steering Committee of DC-Metro DSA
May 10, 2014

Members of the DC-Metro chapter of Democratic Socialists of America oppose the proposed merger of Comcast and Time Warner Cable (MB Docket No. 14-57). The merger, if allowed, would privilege wealthy cable companies over the interests of a majority of the people in the United States. If merged, the new parent company would control 19 of the largest 20 markets in the nation, something that approximates a monopoly. With that kind of economic power, cable customers would see escalating subscription fees, something that would put access out of reach for those in low-income families.

Most low-income families are minorities, a fact that should not be overlooked. Lack of access to cable would also affect access to broadband/Internet services, something that would expand the digital divide between the haves and have-nots. Another aspect in the proposed merger often overlooked is the anticipated layoff of hundreds, perhaps thousands of employees.

We believe this clear worst-case instance of the effects of corporate consolidation should move the FCC to consider the essential public-utility quality of cable and internet services and declare these entities common carriers, governed by the agency's public-interest mandate and subject to regulation to ensure net neutrality in its full meaning.

As the decision heads toward a vote, we urge Commissioners to remember that the Internet was created and developed largely at taxpayer expense. We believe that this resource, now privatized for profit, should remain widely and fairly available to all in the spirit of public interest.