



STATE OF ARKANSAS  
MIKE BEEBE  
GOVERNOR

September 11, 2014

Tom Wheeler, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

It gives me great pleasure to express my enthusiastic support for the merger of AT&T/DIRECTV. It is my understanding that the combined company will provide greatly expanded broadband services, including its fixed wireless local loop (WLL), to underserved rural areas across the nation. Arkansas, like many other rural states, has unfortunately lagged behind in implementing broadband on a statewide level. Our objective is to bring satellite and broadband telecommunications to every corner of Arkansas and raise the quality of life for every citizen. With a merger between these two trusted companies, 13 million more Americans in rural areas across the United States will have the same kind of access to desirable connectivity as their fellow citizens in more cosmopolitan regions.

Rural Arkansans have waited for broadband service for years, but distance, terrain, and demographics have posed major stumbling blocks. With the proposed merger, customers in many of these locations will receive satellite and high-speed broadband networks for the first time---services that most of us take for granted. Bringing affordable, accessible broadband connections to the 48 contiguous states not only opens the door to new opportunities for enhanced services, it will result in improved bundles and cost savings for consumers. This merger combines the strengths of both AT&T and DIRECTV, resulting in meeting the needs of all consumers, no matter where they live.

Our future growth in Arkansas depends on how well we embrace the tools, skills, and resources necessary for us to remain competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including our broadband infrastructure. Expanding accessibility to broadband throughout Arkansas and in underserved areas is an essential economic-development priority and a boon to the consuming public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MB", written over a white background.

Mike Beebe

MB:jb