

September 16, 2014

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioners:

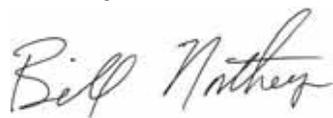
As Secretary of Agriculture in Iowa, I've seen first-hand the positive impact additional technology has on farmers and rural residents across Iowa. Improved productivity, better water quality, additional conservation efforts, new job opportunities and many other exciting advancements have taken place across our state.

It is critically important we continue to improve access to new and better technologies as we work to build on the exciting progress we have made. Both on the farm and in our rural communities, additional high-speed broadband service options can help create new opportunities, keep high quality jobs, and let more people live and work in our rural communities.

Allowing for more broadband options for our citizens and increasing competition can improve service and reduce prices for consumers. The proposed AT&T and DIRECTV merger has the potential to provide additional broadband options to millions of Americans and I hope you will give it all due consideration.

Our rural areas are the fabric of our country and improving the quality of life and business opportunities in these areas is critically important.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Northey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill Northey
Secretary of Agriculture, Iowa