



“Voice of the Western Slope since 1953”
A coalition of counties, communities, businesses & individuals

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September 15, 2014

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20536

RE: Proceeding Number: 14-90

To Whom it May Concern:

CLUB 20 is a coalition of businesses, individuals and local governments with members from 22 counties west of the Continental Divide in Colorado. As a largely rural region nestled within the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, our communities have struggled to obtain access to broadband services that are reasonably comparable to urban centers in Colorado and that are reasonably comparable in price.

CLUB 20 principles state that, “Affordable, quality, widely available access to advanced telecommunications services and broadband service is important to the present and future viability of Colorado communities, businesses and residents.” CLUB 20 supports broadband solutions that provide a level playing field for potential competitors and that are technology neutral. The reality is that communities in Western Colorado need access to broadband service; it needs to be reliable, affordable and ubiquitous. Given the distance, terrain and sparse population in Western Colorado, creative solutions to broadband delivery should be encouraged and private sector investment is important in stimulating competitive alternatives to areas that may not have access to robust competition.

The merger between AT&T and Direct TV is one competitive alternative that may provide opportunities for rural customers to bridge the digital divide with a technology that is growing in its ability to deliver service more efficiently. Given the great need for broadband service delivery in rural Colorado, CLUB 20 supports the merger of these companies and requests that the Federal Communications Commission consider how this business model may help to address the lack of competitive alternatives in rural areas like Western Colorado with an eye toward

providing reasonably comparable service at reasonably comparable prices for businesses and residents as well as health care and education organizations. Broadband service has become a critical infrastructure need across the United States and if this merger can help to bridge that divide, we encourage you to approve it in a timely fashion.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bonnie J. Petersen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "B".

Bonnie Petersen
Executive Director