

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20544

Attorney General Eric Holder
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Attorney General Holder:

As Democratic Members of Congress, we are strongly committed to the nationwide deployment of high speed broadband services. In this year's State of the Union address, the President pledged that within five years, government would make it "possible for businesses to deploy the next generation of high-speed wireless coverage to 98 percent of all Americans" and connect "every part of America to the digital age." Those digital connections will drive investment and innovation in new technologies and services and move the American economy forward to ensure our nation's continuing global competitiveness.

We are cognizant that the proposed merger between AT&T and T-Mobile USA is currently being reviewed by the Commission and the Department, and it is important that those reviews proceed in a thorough and expeditious manner to fairly examine all relevant issues including consumer prices, competition, and innovation. One significant issue to assess in your reviews is increased coverage. As a part of its merger proposal, AT&T has committed to building a next-generation wireless broadband network that proposes to cover 97 percent of Americans. Such a commitment will require billions of dollars in private investment capital and create thousands of jobs, many of which will be good paying union jobs with benefits, which will greatly contribute to our continuing economic recovery.

It is also important to note that the potential for ubiquitous, wireless broadband throughout our nation would be a significant benefit for the millions of Americans that may not otherwise see those benefits, including our constituents living in rural and underserved communities. Bringing 21st century wireless infrastructure to these areas is absolutely critical for our nation's long term economic growth. As the President has stated, wireless broadband is "about a rural community in Iowa or Alabama where farmers and small business owners will be able to sell their products all over the world." We agree.

Finally, we note that nationwide wireless broadband infrastructures will provide a robust platform for the development of new technologies, applications, products and services by America's most innovative companies. The United States created and is the current world leader in the development of mobile applications that improve the productivity and quality of life of our citizens. Further investment and expansion of the networks that carry those applications is critical to maintain our leadership.

The benefits of nationwide, next generation wireless broadband are manifest, and we support the President's pledge to make that vision a reality. The pending AT&T merger proposal pledges to help realize that vision and for this reason, we urge you to give important consideration to these and other prospective benefits during your comprehensive reviews.

Thank you very much.