

Big News with a local angle:

Justice Department Files Antitrust Lawsuit to Block AT&T's Acquisition of T-Mobile Transaction Would Reduce Competition in Mobile Wireless Telecommunications Services, Resulting in Higher Prices, Poorer Quality Services, Fewer Choices and Fewer Innovative Products for Millions of American Consumers

<http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2011/August/11-at-1118.html>

Local Angle:

US Representative Mike Thompson previously indicated his support for AT&T's plan to buy out T-Mobile in a letter to DOJ and FCC that is attached FYI.

Statement of Sean McLaughlin, executive director of Access Humboldt:

"Access Humboldt applauds the announcement by US Department of Justice today of their action to uphold anti-trust law by blocking the acquisition of T-Mobile by AT&T. Consumer advocates, media access proponents and other public interest groups across the nation have documented past mergers and shown how such consolidation of network ownership will raise prices, reduce quality, diminish choice, and hinder innovation across the broadband marketplace. Concentrated ownership of broadband media networks is harmful to the public interest."

Other national perspective from FCC, Media Access Project, Consumers Union:

<http://www.fcc.gov/document/genachowski-statement>

NEWS

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Washington, D. C. 20554  
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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.

See MCI v. FCC. 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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August 31, 2011

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STATEMENT OF FCC CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI (Washington, D.C.)

FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski said

, "By filing suit today, the

Department of Justice has concluded that AT&T's acquisition of T-Mobile would substantially lessen competition in violation of the antitrust laws. Competition is an essential component of the FCC's

statutory public interest analysis, and although our process is not complete, the record before this agency also raises serious concerns about the impact of the proposed transaction on competition. Vibrant competition in wireless services is vital to innovation, investment, economic growth and job creation, and to drive our global leadership in mobile.

Competition fosters consumer benefits, including more choices, better service and lower prices."

-FCC-

Media Access Project:

<http://www.mediaaccess.org/2011/08/media-access-project-statement-on-att-t-mobile-suit/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 31, 2011

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WASHINGTON – Media Access Project Senior Vice President and Policy Director, Andrew Schwartzman, issued the following statement in reaction to the announcement that the United States Department of Justice has filed suit to block AT&T's proposed acquisition of T-Mobile.

"This ought not to be a big surprise. This is arguably the most anti-competitive move in recent American economic history. It is heartening that the Department of Justice has withstood withering political pressure from AT&T to do the right thing for the American public."

Media Access Project represented a number of consumer organizations in filing a challenge to the transaction in a related proceeding before the Federal Communications Commission.

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News Release

Consumers Union – Publisher of Consumer Reports

Wednesday, August 31, 2011

Contact: Kara Kelber, 202-462-6262 or [kkelber@consumer.org](mailto:kkelber@consumer.org)

DOJ Sues to Block AT&T/T-Mobile Merger: Consumers Union Statement

WASHINGTON, DC – On Wednesday, the Department of Justice filed an antitrust lawsuit aiming to block the proposed merger of AT&T and T-Mobile. The complaint points to substantial concerns regarding marketplace competition and the elimination of T-Mobile as a low-cost option.

Parul P. Desai, policy counsel for Consumers Union, said "This announcement is something for consumers to celebrate. We have consistently warned that eliminating T-Mobile as a low-cost option will raise prices, lower choices, and turn the cellular market into a duopoly controlled by AT&T and Verizon. The lawsuit filed by DOJ today proves that it has serious concerns and believes the best way to protect millions of consumers nationwide is by blocking the merger. We will continue to work with policy makers to ensure competition remains strong and in the best interest of consumers."

A recent price analysis survey of the voice and data plans available from AT&T and T-Mobile released by Consumers Union demonstrates that T-Mobile wireless plans typically cost \$15 to \$50 less per month than comparable plans from AT&T. In addition, the most recent cell-phone satisfaction survey by the Consumer Reports National Research Center shows that AT&T got lower marks than T-Mobile on almost every attribute rated, suggesting the proposed merger would be a setback to T-Mobile customers if it lead to service more resembling AT&T's than T-Mobile's.

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