

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Page 1 of 1

AG STRANGE SAYS PROPOSED AT&T/T-MOBILE MERGER TO IMPROVE RESIDENTS' LIVES, COMMUNITIES STATEWIDE

(MONTGOMERY) - Citing the need to improve broadband service, especially in previously underserved rural areas, Attorney General Luther Strange yesterday encouraged the federal government to approve the proposed merger of wireless carriers AT&T and T-Mobile USA. Attorney General Strange said approval of the merger will improve residents' lives and communities statewide, delivering high-speed broadband services to more consumers, strengthening access to public safety, creating jobs and advancing economic growth.

Emphasizing the need for rural Americans to have equal access to high-speed broadband, Attorney General Strange said, "With nearly one-third of our residents living in rural areas, this represents a significant potential benefit beyond just higher call quality and faster data downloads. Rural residents, especially younger ones, will gain access to innovative teaching and medical programs - an important new economic advantage that can help improve access to education, healthcare and jobs."

Attorney General Strange said that he decided to support the merger after hearing from AT&T officials that if the merger received federal approval, AT&T would make a significant investment to expand deployment of the most advanced wireless technology, commonly called 4G service, to more than 95 percent of Alabama residents. In addition to the jobs this infrastructure investment would bring in the short run, extending access to high-speed wireless Internet services to two million more consumers in Alabama would encourage business and job growth into the future.

Attorney General Strange's endorsement came in a letter he co-signed with 10 other state Attorneys General to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Julius Genachowski and U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Assistant Attorney General Christine Varney. The FCC and DOJ must approve the merger for it to take effect.

While recognizing the legitimate federal role in reviewing the merger, the AGs nonetheless urged approval due to the merger's "substantial and far-reaching benefits." These benefits include better quality service, with fewer dropped calls and faster downloads, as well as increased investment, job creation and economic development.

In addition to AG Strange, 10 other AGs from across the country signed the letter: Dustin McDaniel (D-AR), Sam Olens (R-GA), Jack Conway (D-KY), Bill Schuette (R-MI), Jim Hood (D-MS), Wayne Stenehjem (R-ND), Marty Jackley (R-SD), Mark Shurtleff (R-UT), Darrell McGraw (D-WV) and Greg Phillips (D-WY).

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