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United States Senate

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The Honorable John Thune
Chairman
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Committee
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson
Ranking Member
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Committee
716 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson,

I write to request that the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee hold a hearing on the state of competition in the wireless telecommunications marketplace in light of the proposed T-Mobile US (T-Mobile) and Sprint Corporation (Sprint) merger.

T-Mobile and Sprint recently announced that they are officially seeking to merge, creating a massive company with more than 120 million subscribers. Should the deal be completed, the nation's four large wireless carriers will become three, which could leave consumers with fewer choices and the marketplace with less competition. Before the deal can be finalized, the Federal Communications Commission must determine that the merger serves the public interest, while the Department of Justice must ensure the deal does not have major anticompetitive impacts.

The proposed T-Mobile and Sprint merger could present a number of harms to consumers and the marketplace, including higher prices and fewer innovative services. To date, T-Mobile and Sprint have exerted competitive pressures on their larger rivals in the wireless telecommunications industry, helping drive down prices, eliminating harmful contract requirements, and making more expansive and consumer friendly data plans the norm. Without sufficient alternatives to the other two major wireless providers, consumers may be left with no option to switch to a provider offering better, more affordable services. Further, competitive market forces that drive prices down and service quality up may be further weakened.

As the committee with jurisdiction over the wireless telecommunications industry, the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee should review the state of the wireless marketplace and assess the impact of this proposed consolidation on consumers, competition, and innovation.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator