



March 23, 2012

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

*Re: Application of Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless and SpectrumCo LLC For Consent To Assign Licenses; Application of Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless and Cox TMI Wireless, LLC, WT Docket No. 12-4*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

As the president of the Alliance of Retired Americans, I am writing to express my concern over Verizon Wireless' joint marketing and spectrum acquisition agreement with cable companies and how it will affect consumers and retirees. As I understand it, Verizon Wireless and the major cable companies (Comcast, Time Warner, Bright House Networks and, in a separate agreement, Cox) will jointly market each other's products. Verizon Wireless and the cable companies will offer a "quadruple play:" wireless service, broadband, video content ("cable TV"), and telephone service. Verizon Wireless will also purchase \$3.9 billion worth of wireless spectrum from Comcast, Time Warner, and Bright House Networks. This agreement reverses the longstanding rivalry between cable and telephone companies by creating an alliance with overwhelming market power to stifle competition.

I believe this proposal raises a many consumer concerns, including lack of choice, price increases, and decreasing service quality.

First, I am concerned that consumers will no longer be able to choose the company which will provide their services. Verizon Wireless and Comcast are, respectively, the nation's largest wireless provider and the largest cable provider. Time Warner and Cox are also the dominant cable company in their regions. The exclusive ability to offer a "quadruple play" and their already dominant status in the market will allow the Verizon Wireless/cable company alliance to exercise unprecedented market power. This deal is contrary to the purpose of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which is to generate competition and, as a result, lower prices, and provide better service and innovation to benefit consumers.

Second, I am concerned about the potential increase in cable and wireless prices and lower service quality. The Verizon Wireless/Comcast/Time Warner/Cox behemoth will eliminate

competition. Since wireless, cable, internet and internet-telephone prices are unregulated, prices and service quality will be subject to the desires of an unfettered monopoly of telecommunications giants. Without competition, the Verizon/Time Warner/Comcast quasi-monopoly will increase prices for these essential services. Without competition, these companies will have little incentive to maintain or improve the quality of services. This will result in a reduction in service quality for consumers. Millions of retirees depend on good service for both their quality of life and emergencies.

I respectfully request that the Federal Communications Commission address the concerns our organization has raised in this letter before approving such a transaction. It is imperative that we protect consumers of all ages, especially those like retirees for whom telecommunication is literally a lifeline.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank Stella".

Frank Stella  
President