



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release
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NHMC and NiLP File Petition to Deny AT&T's Acquisition of T-Mobile

Washington, D.C. May 31, 2011 - Today, the National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC) and the National Institute for Latino Policy (NiLP), filed a [petition to deny](#) AT&T's acquisition of T-Mobile at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). A horizontal acquisition of this nature, between AT&T, the second largest mobile phone provider in the U.S., and T-Mobile, the fourth largest, would create a highly consolidated mobile telephone market. Consumers, especially itinerant consumers (as many Latino workers are), that rely on national providers to ensure that they can connect no matter their locale, would be forced to select from one of only three mobile phone providers.

"Less competition in the mobile phone marketplace would lead to higher prices, fewer choices and poorer customer service at a time when consumers can least afford it," stated NHMC's Vice President of Policy & Legal Affairs, Jessica J. González. "This would disproportionately harm Latino consumers because Latinos, more than any other demographic group, rely on mobile phones for communication, democratic participation, civic engagement and economic empowerment." Mobile phones have become a necessity for many individuals and families, and with 25% of Latinos living below the poverty line, higher prices would be devastating. On average, Latinos pay \$104 per month for mobile phone services, already significantly more than any other demographic group. And of the four major national carriers, Latinos pay the highest rates on AT&T, averaging bills of \$120 per month, and the lowest on T-Mobile, averaging \$102. Thus, it should be no surprise that approximately 21-25% of T-Mobile's 34 million customers are Latino, compared to 12% of AT&T's customers. If this acquisition were approved, T-Mobile customers would have fewer choices for pricing plans and devices, and would be subject to AT&T's documented history of poor customer service.

González added, "in addition, this acquisition would lead to layoffs even as the U.S. is trying to rebuild its vulnerable workforce. NHMC and NiLP welcome the increased number of union jobs that AT&T claims this acquisition would create, however, those jobs should not come at the expense of layoffs and fewer overall employment opportunities in the telecommunications sector." Unfortunately, countless Latinos and others stand to lose their jobs as a result of AT&T's plans to embrace the so-called "synergies" that this acquisition would produce. In the past decade, both companies have hired large numbers of Latinos to staff and manage their retail stores and to provide bilingual customer service for billing and other issues. Now, AT&T is proposing to consolidate retail stores and billing systems, necessarily leading to layoffs and eliminating opportunities for new entrants.

Angelo Falcón, NiLP's President, had this to say: "NiLP is honored to be a part of this effort by the National Hispanic Media Coalition to challenge the AT&T/T-Mobile merger because of our growing concern about the concentration of corporate power in American society and its negative consequences for the Latino community and all Americans. This merger is a threat to competition and the result will likely be higher prices, especially a problem for Latinos who are so dependent on wireless services and are one of the most economically vulnerable groups in this society. We believe that AT&T has been a good



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corporate citizen in its relations to the Latino community, but there are issues here that go beyond the importance of diversity alone."

"AT&T is held in high regard amongst many Latino civil rights groups for various reasons, including its outreach to and generous philanthropic support of Latino-led and Latino-serving institutions, as well as its history of employing, promoting and retaining Latinos and other diverse individuals throughout its workforce," stated NHMC's President & CEO, Alex Nogales. Nogales added, "NHMC and NiLP acknowledge and appreciate AT&T's efforts within the Latino community, however, they do not nearly compensate for long-term harms that consumers, and particularly Latino consumers, will feel as a result of the acquisition."

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The National Hispanic Media Coalition is a non-profit, media advocacy organization established in 1986 in Los Angeles, California. Our mission is to improve the image of American Latinos as portrayed by the media, increase the number of American Latinos employed in all facets of the media industry, and advocate for media and telecommunications policies that benefit the Latino community. For more information, please visit www.nhmc.org.