

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2309

April 30, 2014

Edward Black
Chief Executive Officer
Computer and Communications Industry Association
900 17th Street, NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Mr. Black,

I oppose Comcast's proposed acquisition of Time Warner Cable, and I have called upon the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Department of Justice (DOJ) to block it. In my view, the acquisition would concentrate unprecedented power in Comcast's hands – power that Comcast can use to harm competitors and consumers.

This concern is especially pronounced in the broadband market, where Comcast will control approximately forty percent of all subscriptions and will operate in the vast majority of the nation's biggest locales. And Comcast not only will control expansive broadband distribution channels, it also will continue to hold a significant content portfolio. It therefore will have both the power and the incentive to control the flow of Internet traffic.

Any non-affiliated content provider who wants access to Comcast's tens of millions of customers will be at Comcast's mercy. In fact, just last week, Netflix sent me a letter explaining how Comcast already is using its market position to extract unnecessary payments from its competitor. Meanwhile, the FCC's Chairman recently announced a proposed rule that would destroy the Internet's longstanding tradition of network neutrality, leaving consumers even more vulnerable. Together, these developments would mean that Comcast wins and consumers – who will experience higher prices, fewer choices, and worse service – lose.

Because of your organization's unique position at the forefront of the nation's technology and communications sectors, I write to solicit your views on this matter. I understand that CCIA's mission is to foster competition, innovation, and open markets, and that CCIA pursues positions in which its members' interests and CCIA's underlying principles are most aligned. Your organization includes companies from many sectors of our communications and Internet economy, including industry leaders in search, social networking, e-commerce, and music and video content delivery. All of these organizations depend on broadband networks to operate.

I respectfully request that you or your designee respond to the following questions: First, do you believe that Comcast's proposed acquisition of Time Warner Cable would harm the public interest? Second, in your view, what impact will the deal have on competition in relevant markets, and, ultimately, on consumers? Finally, please provide any other relevant views, including any thoughts you have about arguments made in the Public Interest Statement that Comcast recently filed with the FCC or in the testimony that Comcast and Time Warner Cable recently provided to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I appreciate your attention to this matter. Please submit your responses to my General Counsel, Joshua Riley, at joshua_riley@judiciary-dem.senate.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Al Franken", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Al Franken
United States Senator