Dear Chairman Wheeler:

It has been more than a year since Comcast announced its intention to acquire Time Warner Cable to form a cable TV and ISP behemoth. The combined company would, among other things: control over half of the high-speed residential broadband connections in the United States; dominate pay-TV across the nation; combine even stronger distribution muscle with NBC-Universal’s “must-have” video programming; and control critical advertising and set-top-box inputs.

Opposition to this merger began the day the deal was announced and has grown to historic proportions. Over 700,000 Americans have called on you to reject the proposed merger, far more people than have opposed any other merger in the history of the Commission. Diverse industry and public interest group stakeholders (several of which are represented by the signatories below) have filed extensive documents in strong opposition to the merger.
The message is clear: the Commission should reject this merger because it would result in too much power in the hands of one company.

You have staked your chairmanship on the importance of fostering competition to protect consumers and spur innovation, investment, lower prices and diversity. We agree. And the only way to protect that competitive future now is to reject the Comcast/Time Warner Cable merger outright — no conditions, no side deals — no merger, period.

As the record demonstrates, and particularly for a company with a track record of disregarding conditions from its last major acquisition, Comcast cannot be relied upon to comply with new conditions that run counter to its built-in incentives to exploit the new market power it would gain from the proposed merger. This is especially true when the sheer size and scope of a combined Comcast/Time Warner Cable, coupled with its incentive to protect its core video business from innovative “over-the-top” online video providers, would allow it to threaten nascent competition in so many different ways. If the Commission approves the merger believing that conditions can somehow prevent or address these harms, there is no going back. The consequences of getting it wrong are too great, the risks simply too high. The public deserves better.

Your steadfast commitment to competition would risk being eviscerated if Comcast were allowed to control over 50% of high-speed residential broadband connections nationwide. No condition, including but not limited to a “net neutrality” provision modeled on the Open Internet order, can address the myriad ways a combined Comcast/Time Warner Cable would be able to thwart competition and convert its massive network into a closed system of preferential treatment for its own content or the content of a select few.

We urge you to follow through on your commitment to competition as the single greatest source of innovation, investment and other consumer benefits. Reject the Comcast/Time Warner Cable merger.

Respectfully submitted,

Antonio Briceno, Managing Director
beIN Sports

Todd O’Boyle, Program Director
Common Cause
Orson Aguilar, Executive Director  
The Greenlining Institute

Jesse Miranda, Founder  
Jesse Miranda Center for Hispanic Leadership

Gilbert Vasquez, Chair  
Los Angeles Latino Chamber of Commerce

Wendy Levy, Executive Director  
National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture

Joshua Stager, Policy Counsel  
New America’s Open Technology Institute

Steve Anderson, Executive Director  
OpenMedia

Arturo Carmona, Executive Director  
Presente

Genevieve Morelli, President  
ITTA

Mike Gravino  
LPTV Coalition

Tracy Rosenberg, Executive Director  
Media Alliance

Robert Gnaizda, General Counsel  
National Asian American Coalition

Jill Canfield, Vice-President of Legal & Industry Assistant General Counsel  
NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association

Tim Winter, President  
Parents Television Council

Gene Kimmelman, President and CEO  
Public Knowledge