

NEWS RELEASE

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AFL-CIO-CLC



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IBEW OPPOSES COMCAST, TIME WARNER BID FOR ADELPHIA Deal Would Hurt Customers, Competition

IBEW President Edwin D. Hill warned that a successful effort by Comcast and Time Warner to purchase Adelphia would strike a blow against competition, hurt consumers and hand near-monopoly control to two of the country's largest cable companies.

"The Federal Communications Commission's role is to regulate commerce in the public interest, not to bless sweetheart deals whose benefits to business far outweigh any for consumers," President Hill said. "In fact, such anticompetitive practices could limit programming available to consumers while increasing subscriber rates."

The IBEW, Communications Workers of America, satellite company DirecTV and other consumer groups filed papers July 21 requesting that federal regulators block or impose conditions on Comcast and Time Warner's joint effort to purchase bankrupt Adelphia Communications Corp.>

FCC officials could prevent Comcast and Time Warner from using their growing influence to secure exclusive rights to popular programming like sports, blocking rivals from broadcasting events. Such anticompetitive moves have already forced blackouts in some media markets. A deal allowing the large companies to grow even further would add 5.2 million more subscribers to their customer base, increasing their access to 59 percent of the nation's cable subscribers. Community and consumer groups have also expressed worries that the increasing consolidation would threaten community access to the airwaves and further erode quality customer service.

IBEW and CWA represent 1.45 million workers in telecommunications, broadcasting, cable, wireless, construction, government, utilities, publishing, manufacturing, airlines, higher education and other public and private sector work. The IBEW and CWA represent several thousands Comcast and Adelphia employees.

