



**For Immediate Release**

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**Proposed Decision of California Public Utilities Commission  
Administrative Law Judge Recommends Approval of  
Comcast-TWC Merger and Requires Major Expansion of  
Low-Cost Internet Program**

***Proposed CPUC decision requires Comcast to offer affordable Internet service to all low-income households, enroll 45% of eligible households in 2 years***

**San Francisco, CA – February 16, 2015** – The presiding Administrative Law Judge at the California Public Utilities Commission on Friday issued a proposed decision for approval of the merger of Comcast and Time Warner Cable, Inc. but requiring significant public interest conditions that were requested by the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), a non-profit organization dedicated to bridging the Digital Divide in California. CETF urges the full Commission to approve the proposed decision with a yes vote on Thursday, March 26, 2015, after comments are received on the decision by parties. Among the highlights:

- Comcast shall expand eligibility for its \$9.95 a month Internet Essentials service to all households in its post merger service area with incomes equal to 150% of the federal poverty level or less. This program is currently limited to households where there is a K-12 schoolchild on the free or reduced lunch program. The minimum broadband speeds offered shall be 10 megabits per second (Mbps) download and 1 Mbps upload, and Comcast shall provide a free Wi-Fi router to all program enrollees, so more than one device can access the Internet, especially tablets that are provided at low or no cost by numerous California school districts.
- Comcast shall enroll at least 45% of eligible households in the Internet Essentials program within two years of the merger date, subject to some an exception in areas where the general broadband penetration rate is lower than 45%. Comcast shall submit an Internet Essentials plan to the CPUC in 90 days after the merger and for 5 years annually thereafter, with specific cost details (with minimum amount of \$275 allocated per eligible

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household for adoption), process improvements to speed program enrollment and reduce wait times, and Wi-Fi options for multiple users in a household.

- Comcast is encouraged to cooperate with the California Emerging Technology Fund and other community-based organizations with significant experience in marketing and outreach to low income communities in California.
- Within four years, Comcast shall connect and/or Internet infrastructure for K-12 schools and public libraries in unserved and underserved areas in the post merger service territory in the same proportion as it provides high speed access to households in the service territory. These school infrastructure plans including expenditures shall be developed with the CPUC, California K-12 High Speed Network, the state Department of Education and State Board of Education, and must be submitted to the CPUC for approval, and an annual report filed.
- Within two years of the merger, Comcast shall upgrade facilities to make broadband services available to all California households where the merger applicants currently provide only video service, and such services must be at speeds of 10 Mbps download and 1 Mbps upload. Within five years, Comcast shall make broadband services available throughout its service territory at 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload, to conform with the new definition of minimum broadband speeds set by the FCC last month.
- For five years, Comcast shall offer all customers of the merged companies stand-alone broadband service, at a speeds, prices and terms at least comparable to the price charged by Time Warner Cable prior the merger's closing.
- No later than three years following the merger, Comcast shall build at least ten new broadband facilities that are adjacent to or near areas that Comcast currently serves by broadband in California. A plan for these new infrastructure builds shall be submitted to the CPUC within 90 days of the merger.

"Historically, the CPUC has been the leader among state regulatory commissions in addressing the Digital Divide and promoting broadband infrastructure and adoption throughout our diverse state," said CETF President and CEO Sunne Wright McPeak. "We urge the five CPUC Commissioners to approve the proposed decision without weakening the conditions -- as Comcast has indicated it will lobby the Commission to do -- and with adding the expertise and knowledge that each Commissioner brings to close the Digital Divide."

She added, "The input from the California Public Utilities Commission will be valued by the FCC. We encourage the FCC to seize this opportunity to immediately use its merger review process to assure a widely-available affordable broadband rate for all low-income households. A similar FCC decision will be regarded as a watershed decision that transforms the ability of all persons - not just those who can afford it -- to participate in the Digital Age."

For more information, please visit [www.InternetForAllNow.org](http://www.InternetForAllNow.org)

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