

DISCONNECTED



HOW THE T-MOBILE/SPRINT MERGER WOULD CUT THE CORD FOR PEOPLE OF COLOR

T-Mobile and Sprint cater directly to people of color and the poor.

After the government blocked AT&T from taking over T-Mobile back in 2011, T-Mobile saved itself by competing hard for new customers.

The company rebranded as the “Un-Carrier” and got rid of contracts and credit checks for certain plans. This meant the racist credit-rating system wouldn’t stand in the way as a barrier for people of color – and this approach completely changed the mobile game.

Sprint wanted these new customers, too. Like T-Mobile, it became a major provider of prepaid mobile options, which are a lifesaver for poor people and folks who don’t keep bank checking accounts.

Percentage of Customers Who Are People of Color



Unemployment, the homework gap, the digital divide, poverty – all these issues and more stand to get worse if the FCC approves the proposed merger between T-Mobile and Sprint.

Workers will be laid off in urban communities.

T-Mobile has already informed Congress that they will begin closing stores if this merger is approved. What they didn’t mention is that most T-Mobile and Sprint prepaid stores are located in urban areas primarily populated by people of color. According to the Communications Workers of America this merger would cause more than 28,000 job losses – and that means Black and Brown workers would be hit the hardest.

The digital divide could get worse – much worse.

Competition among mobile companies has lowered prices and helped close the digital divide. How? Low-income households are more likely to rely on cellphones as their sole internet connection. If people can’t afford mobile plans, they’ll lose home access to the internet. And this will devastate their ability to connect to health care, employment, even simple everyday tasks like doing homework.

What can we do? Spread the word in your community, and get everyone talking about what’s at stake.

Visit freepress.net now to get information and post your comment. We’ll make sure it reaches the FCC.