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SOUTH DAKOTA JOINS WITH 4 OTHER STATES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE IN AN AGREEMENT TO ALLOW WIRELESS MERGER

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PIERRE, S.D. – Attorney General Jason Ravensborg announced today that South Dakota has joined with the states of Kansas, Nebraska, Ohio, and Oklahoma in approving an agreement between the United States Department of Justice, Sprint, T-Mobile and Dish Network.

The agreement is part of a merger between Sprint and T-Mobile worth in excess of \$26 billion.

As part of the agreement, Sprint will divest its Boost Mobile, Virgin Mobile and Sprint prepaid phone businesses. Sprint and T-Mobile will divest some of their wireless spectrum to Dish and make at least 20,000 cell sites and hundreds of retail stores available to the company. Dish will also be able to access T-Mobile’s network for seven years.

Makan Delrahim, head of the DOJ’s antitrust division, said without these remedies, the merger would “substantially harm competition.”

“Americans’ access to fast, reliable and affordable wireless connectivity is critically important to our economy and to every American consumer and to their way of life,” Delrahim said in a press conference announcing the agreement.

“I believe the DOJ has worked diligently for many long hours to tackle this complex merger, and they should be commended,” said Ravensborg. “This is an historic day for consumers as this proposed merger should lead to more competition and coverage in rural area where wireless communication choices are limited.”

Separately, Dish announced it struck an agreement with the Federal Communications Commission to establish a 5G broadband network covering 70% of the U.S. population by June 2023. If it doesn’t meet that deadline, it will pay the U.S. Treasury as much as \$2.2 billion.

Sprint and T-Mobile still face an ongoing lawsuit from 13 state attorneys general and the District of Columbia.

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