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STATE OF LOUISIANA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JOE R. SALTER
District 24

02-P28/12
01-348

Chairman, Legislative Bureau
Appropriations
Education
Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget
Joint Legislative Committee on Capital Outlay
House Executive Committee

April 1, 2002

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Support of Pending Merger of DIRECTV and EchoStar Satellite Systems
Docket #01-348, Federal Communications Commission

Dear Chairman Powell:

As a State Representative from Louisiana I am writing in support of the proposed EchoStar/DIRECTTV merger and ask that the matter get a thorough, fair and timely review on its merits.

The Louisiana legislature is currently in special session to discuss ways to promote economic development throughout our state. This merger will aid economic development in our state tremendously. The creation of a new satellite company with the size and technology to effectively compete with cable television companies would benefit our states' consumers and serve as a healthy stimulus for the pay-TV market.

Another result of this merger will be that consumers across the United States will have access to local broadcast channels with digital-quality television picture and CD-quality sound in every one of the 210 television markets nationwide, specifically all 8 markets in Louisiana. For those Louisiana communities already served by cable and satellite providers, the addition of local broadcast stations and satellite-delivered Internet services represents a real competitive choice. For our rural residents that are not served by cable, nationwide pricing and satellite broadband would provide affordable access to the digital future.

In view of its benefits to consumers and support of the free market system, I look on the merger favorably. It is my hope that the FCC will approve it without unnecessary delay or unreasonable conditions.

Sincerely,



JOE R. SALTER
State Representative
District 24

Cc: Attorney General John Ashcroft
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

Congressman Billy Tauzin, Chairman
House Energy & Commerce Committee
2183 Rayburn House Building
Washington, DC 20515

HYRAM COPELAND
MAYOR

VICKI BYRNES
CITY CLERK

CITY OF VIDALIA

P. O. BOX 2010
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02-P28111
BOARD OF ALDERMAN
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CARTER WARNER

01-348

April 1, 2002

Honorable Michael Powell, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

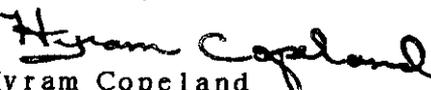
I am writing to encourage you to support the Echostar and Hughes merger that is currently pending. The lack of broadband Internet access and the role that Echostar can play in closing the "digital divide" in a rural area like ours would be very beneficial to our community.

With the proposed merger of Echostar and Hughes, the new company is planning to provide high-speed broadband Internet access via satellite. This would provide a great option to bring broadband services "the last mile" to users and small businesses in our rural area. The digital divide that currently exists between rural and urban areas in our state will no longer exist with this new company.

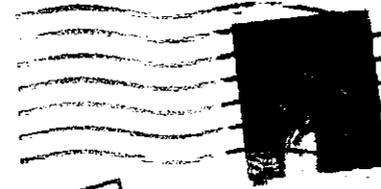
Local-to-local programming options, broadband internet access, and nationwide pricing are all benefits that will be afforded to our rural communities if this merger is approved. The people of Louisiana have benefited from the availability of satellite service and they look forward to the benefits that a combined Echostar and Hughes can offer. For many rural communities, this merger offers the most realistic chance of bringing an affordable high-speed internet access service to their homes.

I hope you will consider my viewpoint as you formulate your position on this merger. I think it is a positive move for competition in the marketplace, and that the merger between the companies should be approved.

Sincerely,

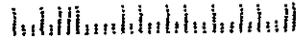

Hiram Copeland
Mayor

SENATOR ROBERT A. ANTONIONI
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE
STATE HOUSE BOSTON 02133-1053



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Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554
Docket #01-348





COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1059

02-P28114
01-348

SENATOR ROBERT A. ANTONIONI
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TAXATION

April 4, 2002

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554
Docket #01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you relative to the pending merger between EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics DirectTV currently before the U.S. Committee on the Judiciary. While there are many advantages to this merger, I believe that it is particularly important to families in rural and suburban communities.

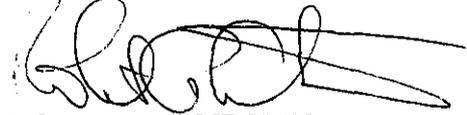
As State Senator, I have become increasingly concerned with the skyrocketing costs of cable services to my constituents. Reasonable people would expect that this increase would at least reap some benefit for the consumer. Unfortunately, the opposite is occurring. Because of the monopoly that has formed in Central Massachusetts, residents are forced to accept a lower cost/benefit ratio and customer service resembles that of stereotypical impersonal corporate America that does not appear among companies in a competitive market.

The most recent example of this trend was experienced with the sale of Cablevision to AT&T Broadband in which AT&T took over local cable services in my district. One of the first casualties of this merger was the cancellation of many local programs that reached out to the community to promote local events and bring information to residents. One of these shows had been in production for over twenty five years. It was only through the efforts of the mayor during contract negotiations that we were able to maintain a local access channel which is run through the local high school.

Another attractive aspect of the merger will be the new company's ability to offer affordable high-speed Internet services to every household. Currently, local cable operators lag behind in their promises to connect every household with affordable broadband services. Suburban and rural communities are often left waiting for services that are available in large urban areas many years sooner. Some households find it challenging simply to schedule an appointment to connect to basic cable services, let alone improvement to high-speed Internet services.

I would ask that you seriously consider supporting the proposed merger between EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics DirectTV.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert A. Antonioni', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

ROBERT A ANTONIONI
State Senator

CITY OF VIDALIA
P. O. BOX 2010
VIDALIA, LOUISIANA 71373-2010



HONORABLE MICHAEL POWELL, CHAIRMAN
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
445 12TH ST. SW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

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