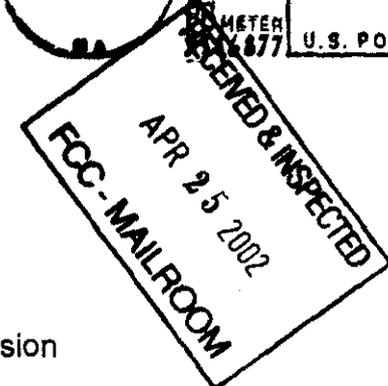
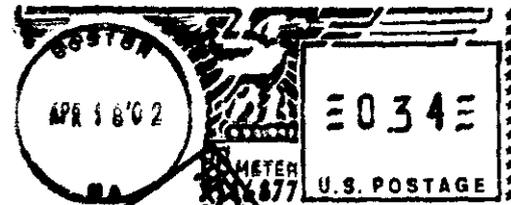
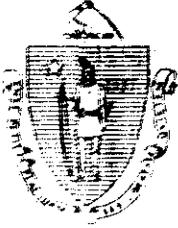


SENATOR JOHN A. HART, JR.
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053



Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20554





COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

02-P27677
01-348

SENATOR JOHN A. HART, JR.
FIRST SUFFOLK DISTRICT

CHAIRMAN
COMMITTEE ON
FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

ROOM 309, STATE HOUSE
TEL. (617) 722-1150

April 12, 2002

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

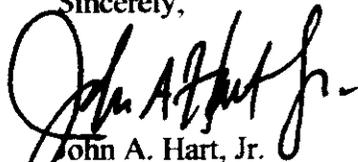
Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing in regard to the pending merger between EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics Direct TV currently before the U.S. committee on the Judiciary.

I understand that this merger will work to soothe the high costs of local cable services that many of my constituents now tolerate. This merger would combine satellite companies to provide a larger and more competitive company, which would offer complete satellite TV listing, local TV channels, and high-speed internet access to every household. With the pressure of price competition between local cable operators, consumers will be able to enjoy reasonable costs for cable television.

I respectfully ask for your most serious consideration in supporting this proposed merger between EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics Direct TV.

Sincerely,



John A. Hart, Jr.
State Senator



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



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Vermont-NEA

10 Wheelock Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05602-3737
(802) 223-6375 FAX (802) 223-1253

April 17, 2002

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

02-227678
01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to inform you of Vermont-NEA's strong support for the proposed merger of EchoStar Communications Corporation and DirecTV. Vermont-NEA applauds EchoStar's ongoing commitment to students all across America, but especially in rural areas where cable education programming is often unavailable or cost-prohibitive.

Vermont-NEA, representing 10,000 public school teachers and school support staff, is committed to making broadband Internet service more accessible to schools and homes in our rural state. We believe that the newly merged company will have the financial resources, technical capacity, and geographical reach to make the broadband revolution a reality for all Vermont children and educators. This merger is an important step in bridging the digital divide, particularly in rural areas like Vermont where many schools and students lack high speed Internet access and diverse programming via cable or other alternative routes.

Our interest in this project is directly related to its beneficial impact on children and public education in Vermont and across the nation. Studies show that **25 % of the U.S. zip codes still do not have high speed connections to the Internet and that approximately one out of every four schools lacks dedicated high speed Internet access.** While all of rural America currently is woefully underserved, **many rural and remote schools also are disproportionately represented in the group without broadband technology.** Echostar and Direct TV have agreed that, if the merger is approved, they will enhance their current high speed internet capabilities to ensure that every zip code in the country has access, thus making it possible for every child in America to be able to cross the digital divide. Their proposed business plan calls for this enhancement to take place by early 2004. Since it is not cost effective for either company to provide this enhancement alone, the expansion of high-speed Internet will not take place without the merger. In addition, competing land based cable companies -- currently servicing 85% of the market-- have not and will not provide this service in the future because it is not cost-effective to do so. One easily can imagine the expense of running wires and putting up towers in rural areas of Vermont where the residents may or may not purchase the product.

Internet use at home continues to dramatically increase. Research indicates that many teachers use the Internet at home to help with their professional work. Furthermore, it now is common for children to use the Internet at home for homework assignments.

However, there is a huge disparity in who can access broadband at home. In fact, a recent joint study by the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture confirms that only 5% of small and rural towns have cable modem broadband choices compared to 65% of larger cities. Many rural and remote communities possibly will never see broadband choices in their communities anytime soon. At the same time, the teachers, parents, and students who live in these communities -- separated by distance and geography -- are the ones that perhaps can benefit most from the delivery of broadband. Right now, they remain on the other side of the digital divide that the Association has fought so hard to eliminate.

Vermont-NEA recognizes and applauds DirecTV's ongoing commitment to transmittal of education programming to schools throughout the country. Through the company's "DirecTV Goes to School" public service initiative, a special programming package called "School Choice" is provided free of charge to

An affiliate of the National Education Association

thousands of K-12 schools. As we move into a new century, this important commitment to children will help them to be better prepared and to compete more successfully in a demanding economy filled with the combined promise of increased educational opportunities and inevitable technical advancements.

This merger will also assist America's teachers and professors with the ongoing research and daily classroom preparation required to instruct their students as effectively and creatively as possible. Vermont-NEA believes that the combined resources of these two satellite companies will lead to a quicker roll-out of advanced television programming (including interactive TV) and other enhanced video services. All of these improvements will also allow our members to communicate and share information with their students and each other much more easily.

On behalf of the thousands of active and retired elementary and secondary teachers and education support personnel who belong to Vermont NEA, I urge you to join us in supporting this important merger for the benefits it will bring to students and schools in Vermont and all across America.

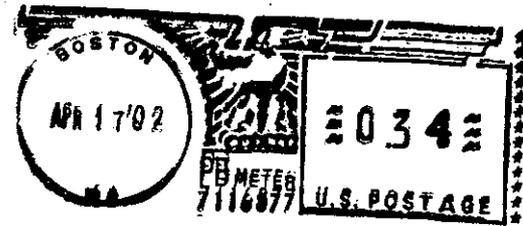
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Angelo Dorta". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Angelo Dorta
President, Vermont-NEA

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
House of Representatives
State House, Boston 02133-1054

PAUL KUJAWSKI
REPRESENTATIVE
8TH WORCESTER DISTRICT



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



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01-348
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE BOSTON 02133-1054

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

April 17, 2002

Dear Chairman Powell,

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

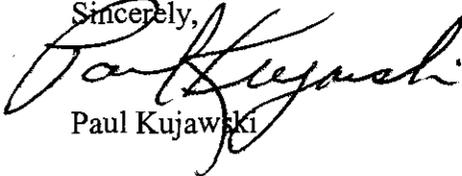
As a State Representative, I have become increasingly concerned with the skyrocketing costs of cable services to the citizens I represent. These traditional underground cable companies hold a virtual monopoly on the local cable market. Each year costs continue to rise with no end in sight. The average family has very little alternative.

I believe that the merger of these satellite companies will provide considerable price pressure on local cable companies. Not only will the merged company be able to provide superior programming, it will also offer serious price competition to local cable operators. Ultimately, the winner will be the average consumer.

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

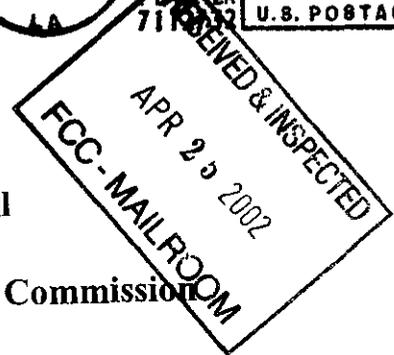
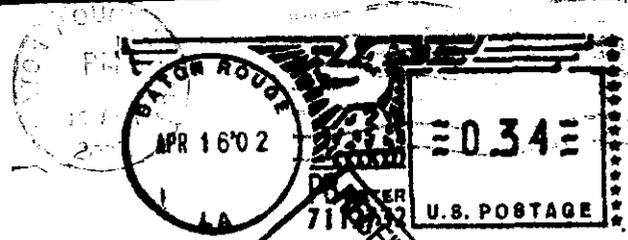
broadband services. Suburban and rural communities are often left waiting for services that are available in large urban areas many years sooner. Some households are years away from connection.

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

Sincerely,

Paul Kujawski



RON BEAN
 STATE SENATOR
 2520 BERT KOUNS INDUSTRIAL LOOP
 SUITE 100
 SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA 71118



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



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RON BEAN
State Senator
District 38
Parishes of:
Caddo and DeSoto

SENATE
STATE OF LOUISIANA

02-P27683
01-348

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(318) 676-7906-Office
1-800-236-0887-Office
Fax: (318) 676-5842

COMMITTEES:
Insurance, Vice Chairman
Revenue & Fiscal Affairs
Transportation, Highways & Public Works
Environmental

April 12, 2002

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

Ref Docket: 01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

I urge you to support the pending merger between EchoStar and Direct TV. The newly formed company will be able to effectively compete against cable companies, which currently control 80% of the pay television market.

The proposed merger will enable EchoStar and Direct TV to free up valuable satellite space and eliminate duplicate programs. In doing this, the merged company will be able to provide local-to-local channels and more program choices to customers in rural areas. The cost for this would be the same whether you live in town or on a farm.

The new EchoStar company will also make a difference in the rural areas of our state that do not have access to high speed internet service. Direct Broadcast Satellite TV will be able to provide Internet service. Through DBS TV, interactive television programs will be provided in most of our schools and increase educational opportunities and offer more quality programming choices.

We have many in underserved rural areas throughout our state. The new company will provide an efficient low-cost alternative. It will bridge the digital divide in our rural areas by facilitating the development of affordable, high-speed satellite-based Internet access.

In supporting this merger, we are encouraging competition that will motivate company's to better serve the consumer. Please review the facts and support this merger.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ron Bean".

Senator Ronald Bean
Louisiana State Senate-District 38