

**LAROY BAIRD, P.C.**  
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW  
109 North 4th Street, Suite 300  
Post Office Box 913  
Bismarck, North Dakota 58502-0913

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LaRoy Baird  
Ross H. Espeseth

Telephone: (701) 223-6400  
Fax: (701) 222-3586

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EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing in regard to the proposed merger between DirecTV and Dish Network. As a satellite dish owner, I am very interested in this merger.

Because we live outside city limits, we are only able to get one broadcast station through our satellite provider. However, if the merger were to be approved, they would carry all broadcast stations across the country – a very appealing option for dish owners across the country.

Aside from carrying local channels, the merger would also bring broadband Internet access to otherwise un-served rural areas in North Dakota. Because the “wired” infrastructure is too expensive in sparsely populated areas in North Dakota, we need to look at “wireless” options to help close the digital divide in North Dakota and other rural parts of the country. With the new EchoStar, virtually all North Dakotans will be able to get broadband Internet access regardless of where they live. In a state like ours where there are few broadband competitors, EchoStar will provide much-needed competition in the broadband and pay television arena.

I encourage you to support the merger because of the new options and choices it will provide for rural states like North Dakota. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

LaRoy Baird

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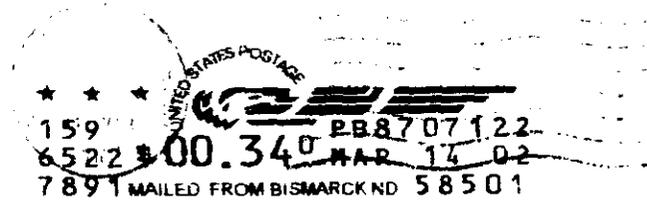
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