

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

Several state governments and large organizations have taken a strong position against the merger of DirectTV and Echostar because it reduces competition. In the various filings by Echostar, there were many assurances about how rural consumers would be treated under a combined company. None of the opponents of the merger have given us the same assurances. Specifically in regard to Alaska the opponents of the merger do not guarantee us access to any DBS platform or broadband service on a basis comparable to other rural states. The NRTC and Pegasus have been especially vocal in their opposition but have made no moves to offer or support improved services to Alaska.

Pegasus does not even plan to provide broadband service to Alaska from its Ka band slot and to our knowledge the NRTC hasn't included Alaska in any of its plans for rural television. They claim to represent rural America, but their actions indicate they don't include Alaska as part of rural America. SES would like to put up a new DBS service but will it serve Alaska. Probably not. Astrolink and Wildblue will not provide broadband service to Alaska from their planned constellations. Spaceway claims to serve Alaska, but geographically only covers 20% of the area covered by Starband today.

Any of these satellite broadband systems can easily replace Starband. At that point Alaska will take a big step backwards. Who opposing the merger is willing to say that won't happen. All I can say is be prepared to spend a whole lot more universal service money (while the rest of rural America is spending less) to provide internet services in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Tom Brady
7760 Mclure Cir
Anchorage, AK 99507