

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

Dear Member of Congress:

I am writing this letter in support of the pending merger between Echostar and DirectTV. I have been in the satellite business for over 20 years. I know many of you hear and read many things both pro and con. I think my voice is a very important one. I have been a customer-oriented business for over 30 years. I can tell you that for many years, the satellite industry was the only available competitor to the cable industry. Most all my customers come from rural areas. In many cases we were the only programming available. Our rates were always lower than cable with the big dish. The only problem was the cost. We received opposition from everywhere. The NAB, local cable companies and even congress. Lobbyists sure painted a gruesome picture of who we were and what we had to offer consumers. I can tell you first hand it has always been an uphill fight. When we were finally recognized by a few members of congress that understood what we were offering to consumers. We began to receive calls from the public and sales were picking up. The pictures from satellite in most cases was much better than cable and much cheaper. In the satellite business we have no plan to maintain allowing better prices. We were finally gaining respect from both Congress and the public. Then came what we had all been waiting for. A little dish that everyone could afford. The FCC and Congress mandated that certain spectrum be allocated for this new service. This was done so there would be an effective competitor to cable. It was never done with the thought that we were being created to compete within ourselves. This is what bothers me the most when I hear about us becoming a monopoly. It's absurd. The only way we will ever be able to effectively compete is to allow this merger to take place. Those few within our own industry that object only do so for monetary reasons. With new spectrum we will become real competitors to the cable giant who so despises us. These are the same cable companies who kept telling customers lie after lie to prevent them from getting satellite. For many years cable companies told consumers we would never have local channels. We were portrayed as stupid people who sold a panacea. A dream. I will agree, all of this started from a dream and a vision. Now as a member of congress you can make it a reality for millions of customers. Especially those in rural areas. We have always been a lifeline for the masses. We provided services when cable refused to saying it was not profitable. They have never have been customer friendly and quite frankly did not care about rural areas. I understand their concern now. We have become a larger competitor that they ever imagined and now stand on the threshold of real competition. Able to offer to all consumers in 210 DMA's a real competing service. Oh by the way, I can tell you first hand where local channels have been available, cable subscribers are coming on board by the thousands. I hear the rumblings from the NRTC and Pegasus. I can assure you, their only concern is their pockets and not rural consumers as they claim. I hope this letter helps you make a more knowledgeable and informed decision. If you would like to contact me, feel free to do so.

Sincerely,

Terry Burnett
7412 Preston Highway
Louisville, KY 40219