

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you today as a former satellite TV subscriber who would like to add my voice of support to the pending merger of EchoStar and DIRECTV.

The combination of these two satellite providers will provide numerous benefits to consumers like me, including more choices in channels, programming, broadband and new television technologies. The reason I don't have satellite service currently is because I am unable to receive local channels on satellite service. The only way I can receive local channels is via the local cable service. I prefer the level of service of satellite TV based on prior experience and was a very satisfied customer with Directv. The second I am able to get local channels via satellite I will be canceling my cable service and signing up for Directv/Dish Network. I think this is extremely important in West Virginia because we are controlled by the monopoly of the cable companies. I think everyone should have multiple companies to choose from. It will improve the services offerings and improve customer service if there is more competition. West Virginia citizens need a choice.

By merging, the combined company will be a much stronger competitor to cable television and can offer more programming choices and, most importantly, all local TV channels in every market in the U.S. By providing local TV channels everywhere, this merger will make satellite television a strong alternative to cable in our community. Throughout the country, people will now be able to turn to satellite TV to access their local news, weather and community information, in addition to a comprehensive package of national video programming. But just as exciting, the merger will bring the availability of affordable high-speed Internet service by satellite to over 40 million Americans who don't have high-speed Internet access. These tremendous benefits to consumers won't happen without the merger. Satellite-delivered Internet service will bring an affordable and competitive alternative to cable modems and DSL to consumers in big cities, small towns and rural areas alike. This will give me a competitive choice for Internet access and will be especially advantageous to rural communities where cable modems and DSL are not likely to be available anytime in the near future.

In the interest of improving our access to competitive television and Internet service, I urge you to lend your support to this merger.

Sincerely,

Mark Burdette
207 Willowcrest Drive
Charleston, WV 25311