

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

I'm writing to urge you to support the proposed merger between Hughes Electronics and EchoStar Communications. I believe the merger holds tremendous potential for my company in Englewood, CO which sells the DIRECTV satellite TV service. The new company will offer a more attractive product to consumers, and this will mean more business for my company.

The majority of my customers are able to subscribe to their local broadcast channels via satellite, but some of those who live in smaller television markets cannot. Currently, DIRECTV offers local broadcast service in only 43 television markets. If the merger is approved, DIRECTV and DISH Network can more efficiently use their limited channel capacity and offer local service via satellite in all 210 television markets nationwide. The ability to offer local broadcast channels to all of my customers makes selling the product easier and gives customers more choices among satellite and cable providers in the near future.

For my customers who do enjoy broadband access to the Internet via DSL and cable modem, this merger will result in increased competition in the broadband market, because the new company will be able to provide an affordable high-speed Internet access service via satellite. This would help drive down prices of the DSL and cable providers. For those living beyond the reach of cable and DSL wires, the new company may be their only chance of getting an affordable high-speed Internet service.

My customers chose satellite TV over cable because of its superior customer service, better quality picture and sound, and the abundance of channel options. However, cable companies now offer digital cable in millions of homes. This has negated the past advantages of satellite over cable TV and has begun to hurt DIRECTV's and EchoStar's ability to compete. The new company will have the resources, spectrum and satellites necessary to offer a competitive satellite TV product while improving customer service and keeping cable prices in check.

High Definition Television (HDTV) was supposed to be available to the American public today, but consumers are still waiting for broadcasters and cable operators to provide the service. HUGHES and EchoStar have pledged to use some of the spectrum made available by their merger to increase their HDTV channel offerings, to at least twelve HDTV channels. I am excited because greater availability of HDTV programming will translate into more sales opportunities for my HDTV televisions and related products.

DIRECTV will not be able to compete effectively with the cable companies in the future unless it has the ability to match their technological innovations. The merger will allow the new company to provide HDTV, Interactive TV, and near video-on-demand. The other benefits outlined above are important, but these are

the most important ones for me. Please support the EchoStar-HUGHES merger, and help bring these advanced television services to consumers sooner rather than later.

Sincerely,

Ash Hampshire
8253 S Quebec St
Englewood, CO 80112