

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

As a customer of DIRECTV, I am writing to urge you to support the pending merger of EchoStar and HUGHES, the parent company of DIRECTV. I believe the merger will increase video and broadband choices for consumers like me.

In October of 2001, I dropped my cable TV and Internet service from Cable One in favor of DirecTV and DirecPC Broadband. I did this with the understanding that I would not have access to local channels or programming from the major networks (i.e.: ABC, CBS, NBC, etc.). However, it was a sacrifice I was willing to make rather than continue dealing with the increased rates and poor service of Cable One. In my opinion, Cable One in the Mississippi Gulf Coast market enjoys the same monopoly status of AT&T, pre-breakup.

When I first heard about the proposed merger of EchoStar and Hughes, and the potential benefits regarding local programming, I was thrilled. The combined company will be a much stronger competitor to cable operators, specifically in smaller markets like the Mississippi Gulf Coast. By being able to offer local TV channels via satellite, it will force companies like Cable One to be more competitive with their prices, while also being more sensitive to the issue of customer service. I believe such a merger is in keeping with the spirit of the Telecommunications Act.

I strongly urge you to support the EchoStar-Hughes merger. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Charles Clements
3420 17th Street
Gulfport, MS 39501