

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

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

The combined company will be dominated by the Hughes-DIRECTV organization, a company with a lamentable record of customer service, even in the absence of a monopoly position.

For example, when they make changes to their channels, causing confusion for customers, they have in the past blocked all access to any human in their organization to all existing subscribers. They do this by detecting the source phone number, matching it to their subscriber base and diverting those subscribers into a dead end voice mail system. I discovered this by using a different line to call them about a service problem. The line not known to them reached a human easily. The line that is registered as part of my service was blocked.

They were apparently eager to sell service to new customers while ignoring the needs of their existing ones.

Currently, they are having trouble making an access card transition resulting in the blockage of service to existing customers. This has gone on for a period of almost six months with obnoxious messages overlaying the paid for programming and culminating in the blockage of all premium services.

Each time these messages occur, they say they are sending new access cards to remedy the problem. Each time none is sent (they will sometimes acknowledge this when they don't arrive, other times they pretend they were actually sent).

It is difficult to imagine that their customer service people are unaware of the situation, so I must conclude that they are lying on behalf of the company.

Such behavior does not inspire confidence that the combined company will respect consumers more from a monopoly position in satellite programming than it does from its current dominant position.

I appreciate your consideration of my views.

Sincerely,

John Brisbin
1857 Andrews Avenue
San Jose, CA 95124