

I would urge you to deny the proposed merger of Echostar and Hughes.

As a Dish Network customer for over 5 years, I have seen them grow from David into Goliath. I believe that his proposed merger will be bad for the consumer for the following reasons:

Since it will be non-economical to continue the two different services, ultimately several million set-top boxes will need to be replaced. The costs of this conversion will ultimately be borne borne by the consumer, as the merged company will have to raise rates to recoup the cost of the equipment replacements.

The merger of the two largest satellite providers will create a monopoly in the satellite TV business. This is going in the wrong direction - it will then become a choice of cable or dish. Back when I initially subscribed, there were 3 satellite providers (Primestar was the third, and it was acquired by Directv several years ago). The existence of multiple satellite providers helps keep prices (for both satellite and cable) in check, and provides multiple options to the consumer. Look at the mobile phone providers - they only dropped their prices when competition from the PCS providers came to be. If we were still left with only two mobile phone providers in each market, we surely wouldn't be paying less than 10-cents per minute for mobile phone services.

My five years with Dish Network have been filled with empty promises. They have repeatedly made promises about their equipment, such as promising new features that were significantly delayed, or never materialized. I have now learned that I must only believe what I can see with my own eyes at the time of purchase, because any forward looking statements from Dish are only empty promises. Dish is constantly spooling bug fixes for their receivers via satellite downloads, and many of their fixes have caused other problems - my bottom line is that they still don't quite have it together, and you shouldn't rely on their promises and representations.

Please keep competition alive in the satellite TV business; two providers will allow fairer competition on prices and services.