

DKT

01-348

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

RECEIVED & INSPECTED  
SEP 11 2002  
FCC - MAILROOM

Tuesday, August 06, 2002  
20837 SE 155<sup>th</sup> Place  
Renton, WA 98059-9064

To: Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554  
Re: Echostar/Hughes Merger

Confirmed

SEP 12 2002

Distribution Center

Sirs:

My family has been a fairly long-term C-Band satellite user (about 10 years). Although cable is now available in our area (it became available years after we got our C-Band system), we prefer to use the C-Band system for several reasons.

- 1) It is cheaper, since we are able to subscribe to only those services or stations we need.
- 2) Our system is paid for.
- 3) The quality is at least as good as cable, and better than the digital Dish Network.
- 4) We can receive the local stations adequately from a standard VHF antenna.
- 5) The digital HDTV signals are not available on cable.

Note that, prior to the acquisition of Turner by the current provider, Superstar/Netlink, the 1<sup>st</sup> reason above was even more noticeable. Superstar has gathered several stations that were previously optional under Turner, adding them to their basic package. The cost has also gone up from approximately \$90 to \$160 in those 3-4 years. Naturally, some of this may be reasonable additional costs of the underlying programming, but the additional services/stations are of no interest to our family, resulting in us paying for services we do not desire.

We are also users, at our 2<sup>nd</sup> home in Cle Elum, WA, of DirecTV (for a new installation, DirecTV is far less expensive than C-Band). Although the quality is good and the local Seattle stations are now available, we are again paying for services and stations that we do not desire to watch.

I am very concerned that the proposed merger will result in an extremely un-competitive situation. Firstly, the current system suffers from lack of competition – witness the dearth of additional C-Band providers that has essentially driven up our costs. Secondly, Superstar/Netlink wishes to convert all C-Band users to Dish Network (presumably to reduce their costs and eventually suspend C-Band service.) I have enclosed two offers that I have received from them on this subject. Notice that, although they provide inexpensive upgrades, and service FOR THE FIRST YEAR that matches our current C-Band subscription price, subsequently we would be paying approximately \$100 more for Dish Network than we currently pay. AND we would receive even more channels that we have no use for.

No. of Copies rec'd  
List ABCDE

01/

In my view, the proposed merger can only accelerate this process of increasing prices and addition of unneeded or unwanted services/stations. The situation is not beyond competition at our house in Renton, as we could use the ATT Cable service; however, we would again be paying for services we don't need (local stations) and stations we don't want. However, satellite services are essentially the only option in Cle Elum, and indeed in many rural areas, not only in Washington State but all other rural areas of the country.

Giving one company unfettered competition in the entire US seems particularly undesirable; similar in principle and effect to the ATT monopoly on phone services that was ended 20 years ago.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Floyd Rogers". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Floyd Rogers