

Illinois State Medical Society



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July 31, 2002

The Honorable Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS) which represents over 15,000 physicians. ISMS was contacted recently by the National Alliance of Medical Researchers and Teaching Physicians asking us to support a proposed merger of two nationwide satellite TV carriers. This merger would purportedly provide sufficient broadband spectrum to satisfy the need for telemedicine options available to physicians and patients throughout the United States, especially in rural settings.

While ISMS does not have a position on the specific merger of EchoStar and DIRECTV satellite TV companies, it does support the principle of providing sufficient broadband spectrum. We would encourage any activities that expand the availability of this technology to maximize the use of telemedicine, which in turn, will increase patients' access to their physicians and supporting health care services, particularly those patients in rural locations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue and its impact on the provision of medical care.

Yours sincerely,

Ronald L. Ruecker, M.D.
Chairman, Board of Trustees

RLR:ec

cc: John F. Schneider, M.D.
William E. Kobler, M.D.
Alexander R. Lerner

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