

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

I'm not sure why Echostar wants me to write to members of Congress, since the firm's proposed acquisition of DirecTV from General Motors is a question of antitrust law, not legislation.

However, let me note that competition involves much more than price, else we would all be driving Toyota Carollas or similar automobiles.

And competition in the satellite and cable-TV market involves more than the downstream consumer. It also involves upstream program providers. Just recently, Echostar successfully competed for the right to distribute the Discovery Channel's new high-definition product. If Discovery were unable to spark competition for that service between satellite distributors, we might not have that new channel at all.

On Independence Day, it's worth remembering that one of the Founding citizens' objections to continuing government by the crown was the existence of royal monopolies that could extort money and restrict innovation. Echostar proposes to acquire a monopoly over satellite television distribution in the U.S. The only difference between a private monopoly and a government monopoly in a democratic republic such as ours is that the citizens get to choose, albeit indirectly, the board of directors of the latter, no matter their income level.

Sincerely,

Arthur Amolsch
P.O. Box 356
Basye, VA 22810