

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

I would like to strongly express my support for the Echostar and Hughes merger.

Right now there is virtually no competition within franchise areas for Cable operators. I know of very few communities where cable operators are allowed to compete against each other. Yet the DBS companies must compete not only against the local cable operators, but against each other. This is ridiculous, and not to the consumer's benefit.

As to that the fact the 'local cable operator' is a misnomer. How many cable systems are owned by Paul Allen, AOL, AT&T or Cox? Cable operators are mostly owned by large media companies, and are allowed economies of scale denied to the satellite industry. What sense does it make to use valuable spectrum for the DBS operators to distribute the same channels? The duplication is enormous, and those resources could best be put to other uses.

Specifically, to broadcasting local channels and providing high speed Internet access. I am forced to use my cable operator for those services, and I can tell you from first hand experience that their service stinks, because they know I have nowhere else to go.

Free the DBS operators to provide a true competition to cable. Approve the merger.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dan Collarini
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New Orleans, LA 70121