

SENATE
STATE OF LOUISIANA

NOBLE E. ELLINGTON

State Senator
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COMMITTEES:

Judiciary A - Chairman
Finance
Labor and Industrial Relations
Senate and Governmental Affairs
Joint Legislative Committee
on the Budget

January 3, 2002

Chairmen Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington D.C. 20554

Dear Chairmen Powell:

As you know I have and continue to represent large rural areas of our state as a state representative and now in the Louisiana State Senate. The purpose of my letter is to state that I believe that the proposed merger between Echostar and Hughes Electronics could bring unique and exciting benefits to our rural constituents.

Many times one of the biggest hurdles in economic development in the rural area is overcoming the so-called "digital divide" that exists between urban and rural residents. The combined company will be able to provide high-speed satellite Internet and broad band service to rural America at prices competitive to what urban customers pay using cable or other wired services. By having this improved service many in the rural community could overcome the barrier of access and this will benefit our schools and businesses in the rural area.

It seems like there is new and improved technology coming out each and every day. This merged company could provide the rural parts of Louisiana with competitively priced access to that ever changing technology and I hope you will seriously consider this matter.

Sincerely,

Senator Noble Ellington
Chairman, Senate Judiciary A Committee