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January 14, 2002

**Re: EchoStar/Direct TV merger**  
**Docket # 01-348**

Michael K. Powell, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 – 12<sup>th</sup> St., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20544

Dear Chairman Powell:

I support the EchoStar/Direct TV merger, because it will provide many benefits to consumers, urban and rural, by providing an effective and viable alternative to cable companies that continue to have monopoly power in every market they serve.

The merger will benefit the consumer because they will receive more programming choices and competitive pricing. The educational choices will benefit our children, in that schools will have more opportunities for educational and foreign language programming. Interactive TV will also be made available in schools.

We have many underserved in rural areas. The cost to receive direct broadcast satellite TV for the consumer will be the same in rural or urban areas. Today, broadband access is available only for urban and suburban residents reached by cable modem services or the DSL carried over telephone lines. The new company, EchoStar, will provide an efficient low-cost alternative. It will bridge the digital divide in our rural areas by facilitating the development of affordable, high-speed satellite-based internet access.

Lastly, the merger will provide more spectrum for EchoStar to use, eliminating duplicative programming, thus greatly increasing the combined firm's choice of programming and services. I hope you will support the merger.

Sincerely,  
CRAFT FRIDKIN & RHYNE, L.L.C.  
Harold L. Fridkin

*(transcription – original on file; call (816) 561-7555)*