

Greetings:

I am writing in support of the proposed merger between DIRECTV and DISH Network. I am a DIRECTV subscriber, but because my zip code was deemed 'rural' by some government entity (even though I have full access to cable and am still a basic cable subscriber) I am forced to get my DIRECTV subscription through Pegasus Satellite Communications. I would much prefer to go through DIRECTV. Pegasus has terrible customer service, has no convenient web-based pay-per-view capability that I'm aware of, and overall the only thing NRTC/Pegasus does is add a layer of bureaucracy that is inefficient and totally unnecessary. But the NRTC is determined to protect THEIR monopoly.

Which brings me to my point. It is highly hypocritical of the NRTC, etc., to accuse EchoStar and Hughes of anti-trust violations. If the NRTC is really in favor of competition, as they claim, perhaps they would be willing to let me choose my own DIRECTV provider? Probably not.

As a 'rural' customer, let me say the NRTC does not speak for me. I WANT the merger. I WANT local channels via DBS, I WANT wireless high-speed internet, I WANT more HDTV choices via satellite. If we have to wait for the broadcasters and cable to get their act together, the DTV transition will NEVER happen!

I find the whole notion that a satellite 22,000 miles in space can discriminate between urban and rural parts of the globe to be ludicrous! An insult to my intelligence! What would Charlie Ergen gain by gouging 1.8 million subscribers out of 25 million anyway? The attempt to block the merger isn't to protect rural consumers, it's being done to protect the cable industry. I know it. You know it. If not for DBS, the cable industry would never have transitioned to Digital Cable. They were dragged kicking and screaming all the way. Cable was perfectly content with the same poor picture quality until DBS started attracting their subscribers (like me). Cable and Broadcast are AFRAID of competition because they have inferior technology, and are unwilling to invest in the necessary improvements unless mandated by the feds. And even then they stall it as much as possible. Witness the recent mad dash by broadcasters to apply for FCC waivers to the May 1st DTV Rollout deadline!

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To summarize, I believe the proposed merger is good for me. It will provide 'local' consumers like me with the services (and picture quality) I want. I think the price-gouging accusation is a red herring, a non-issue and I don't fear it in the least. I ask that you support the merger.

Thank you for your time.