

**COMMENTS TO FCC**

**“CORPORATE AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY IN EDUCATION  
PROVIDING EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY”**

*By*

**ICAN NETWORKS, INC.**

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*In the Matter of*

**DIRECTV – ECHOSTAR MERGER**

**FCC CS Docket No. 01-348**

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It is urged that as a requirement of the merger between EchoStar-DirecTV that they be required to devote a certain amount of satellite transponder time “directly” to education for transmission of live educational content nationwide. Although a satellite broadcast company, must devote a certain percentage of its air time to public service programming, a distinction between “transponder time directly for education” and “public service programming,” should be drawn. Public service programming is a right of passage for a broadcasting company. The educational needs of society at this time requires more than just public service programming. A path to progress in education should be required. That path may be opened by satellite. Satellite can provide the vehicle for bridging the educational gap and that gap could be more cost-effective if transponder time is allotted to education as a condition of the merger.

It is urged that EchoStar-DirecTV be required to devote transponder time to dissemination of live educational content nationwide. Through satellite transmissions there can be a nationwide classroom with the best that the teaching profession has to offer reaching even the most rural of areas. Through satellite transmissions and existing technology, the best teachers can teach the neediest students. The best, most inspiring

math, history, science, language, marketing, safety, and motivational teachers, the best of the best, can be selected from across the nation and can be disseminated to classrooms and homes across the country through in an economically feasible manner.

There is a need for better education at all levels and this need should be satisfied by giving the best society has to offer. Satellite is the best means to extend the reach for dissemination of educational content beyond the terrestrial bounds. If the satellite transponder time is provided by EchoStar-DirecTV, satellite is the most cost-effective means to transmit live educational content nationwide. It is the best, if not only, means to reach rural and underserved areas with media rich educational content.

The actions of the FTC and FCC, at this time in, in exercising the opportunity to require EchoStar-DirecTV to devote a specific amount of transponder time for transmission of educational content would enhance the future of education and assure it has a cost-effective path for growth. The urged condition could have important long-term benefits to education by making rich media educational content more readily available. Proper action at this time, may prevent or reduce the potential for future burdens upon State and Federal educational systems, provide a more interesting rich media format, enhance consumer choice, and contribute to insuring a fair competitive educational market.

Society has the duty to provide equal educational opportunity for all. The merger of EchoStar-DirecTV provides an opportunity for the FCC and EchoStar-DirecTV to make cost-effective dissemination of educational content more readily available nationwide. EchoStar-DirecTV should provide transponder time for live and archive

educational content across the nation. This transponder time should be a part of, or in addition to, the normal public service programming requirements. The greater the size, the greater the public responsibility. The FCC should set conditions of the merger which provide a potential to enhance education and extend it's reach.

Knowledge is the raw material upon which society is built and access to knowledge is the springboard for individual and community advancement. We are at a time when technology is impacting the world in ways that only the future can really tell. Some believe that interactive satellite education will have as great an impact upon the history of the world as the development of language, the printing press, and television. By requiring EchoStar-DirecTV to devote a certain amount of transponder time directly to education, government and private industry can expand the potential reach and effectiveness of education in a cost-effective way. The opportunity to provide knowledge is the duty of society and the right of the individual to receive it. It is a duty of an advancing society to provide equal access to information and the opportunity to learn, especially when the means to do it are available.

*Respectfully Submitted March 02*

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