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I am voicing concern against the merger of Echostar and DIRECTV. I believe that this is a very clear case of monopolistic behavior. One company should not be able to own all of the valuable DBS frequency orbital slots. Once this merger is completed, Echostar will be a sole supplier of multi-channel programming, and most consumers will have no recourse. Competition between DIRECTV, Primestar, USSB and Echostar has created a viable and valuable service for the American consumer. Without the Satellite competition, there wouldn't be Local Channels, Sports Programming, Interactive services, High Definition Services, etc... Competition also improved cable service, including content, quality and customer service. In many areas, there will only be one option (Echostar), which is not good for the development of new services. Echostar management has consistently thumbed their nose at SHIVA by placing in market local channels on two orbital slots, as well as removed channels (ESPN Classics) for purely political reasons. Right now, a consumer can go to DIRECTV for this channel. After the merger, the consumer is stuck with what they get. I urge you to NOT approve this deal.

Regards,
Martin Jacobs