

The Honorable Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable John Ashcroft
Attorney General
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20530

May 21, 2002

Sirs,

With all due respect, I am writing to urge the various branches of the United States government to stay out of the EchoStar-DIRECTV merger and let those businesses and their stockholders decide their own futures.

My personal belief is that the merger will have unambiguously positive consequences for the people of America. Specifically, it will permanently close the so-called Digital Divide with universal access across the entire land. No “bad neighborhoods” will be beyond reach of the high-bandwidth, one-price-for-all internet access the new company plans to provide. It will truly be a leveling of the playing field for all minorities.

Furthermore, with several international satellite companies working to enter the U.S. market, there really should be no fear of “anti-competitive” outcomes of the merger.

But of course, I can’t see the future—and neither can anyone in Washington. This is why I urge you, your departments, and everyone in the business of regulating business to remember what President Bush said earlier this month when honoring Nobel laureate Milton Friedman:

“Milton Friedman has shown us that when government attempts to substitute its own judgments for the judgements of free people, the results are usually disastrous. In contrast to the free market’s invisible hand, which improves the

lives of people, the government's invisible foot tramples on people's hopes and destroys their dreams.”

I thank you for your consideration and ask that you please let the market determine the outcome of this merger.

Sincerely,

Louis James
President