

WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON
SECOND DISTRICT, LOUISIANA

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
240 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1802
(202) 225-6636

LIONEL R. COLLINS, JR.
CHIEF OF STAFF

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1012 HALE BOGGS FEDERAL BUILDING
501 MAGAZINE STREET
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70130
(504) 589-2274

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED
ORIGINAL

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1802

COMMITTEES
WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEES
TRADE
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

DEMOCRATIC STEERING AND
POLICY COMMITTEE

WHIP AT-LARGE

May 17, 2002

MP
John
per
MKP
1913

01-348

Honorable Michael Powell
Chairman
Federal Communication Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

RECEIVED

JUN 18 2002

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Ref. Docket: 01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you in regard to the proposed merger between EchoStar Communications and Direct TV. The benefits to consumers will mean programming choices and competitive pricing to rural residents through out the State of Louisiana.

This new company will break the exiting digital divide and bring a virtual third line, similar to the bundled offerings of video and data by cable, into the homes that cable has deemed too expensive to serve. The merger between EchoStar and Direct TV will offer one pricing plan, more programmable channels and high-speed Internet access. The digital divide that exists between many rural areas, especially businesses and schools that is due to lack of access to cable modern service or DSL, will no longer exist because of the satellite platform in place.

This merger has the potential to greatly improve competition in two markets: pay TV and high-speed Internet access. The merged company will be able to eliminate duplicative programming within the much broader spectrum that will be available to it. It will offer local-to-local broadcasting to all markets and enable everyone to be on a more level footing for both television and Internet customers. This is our opportunity to remain competitive and proved opportunities for rural residents to stay in touch with the newest technology in the world.

Many times one of the biggest hurdles in economic development is overcoming the so-called "digital divide". The combined company will be able to provide high-speed Internet and broadband service at competitive prices.

JUN 5 10 08 AM '02

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

No. of Copies rec'd 2
List ABCDE

I appreciate your consideration of my views and I ask that you review the facts and consider the benefits of this merger.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Jefferson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "W" and a long, sweeping underline.

William J. Jefferson
Member of Congress