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January 23, 2002

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Proceeding # 01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

The proposed merger between EchoStar and DirecTV appears to be a very beneficial development which will have a significant effect on the quality of life - especially in rural regions of our nation.

I am a subscriber to DirecTV at my home several miles outside Sioux Falls. For a very competitive price, I can receive channels which are wonderful educational tools for my two small daughters (**Crocodile Hunter** is the big hit with all three of us). I am looking forward to the expanded programming which would result from this merger, as well as the added feature of more localized programming. Additionally, the foreign language programming which will be made available to a larger audience with this merger will be highly beneficial to the growing immigrant population in South Dakota.

In my career, I have served as a mental health therapist, university faculty and a business developer. Presently, I am the Director of Training for a large human services organization in Sioux Falls which deals with a wide variety of needs in this region. I know from my career experience just how valuable it is to rural states like South Dakota to have access to technological leaps forward like this merger.

Thank you for your attention to my views on this important development.

Sincerely,



Mary E. Jones