

I am convinced that the merger of DirectTV and Echostar will be in the best interests of consumers everywhere. Currently, most areas of the country either have to take the one cable company they are wired to or switch to one of the two satellite networks. In many areas of the country this is not a fair choice because you can only get all your local channels on the cable network. The satellite provider, not being able to support all local channels in all areas without the merger is forced to support no local channels and hence cannot compete with cable in that area on an equal footing. With the merger many more cable companies would be opened to full competition which they are not currently open to.

Understandably, there is worry that rural areas will now only have one choice and hence be faced with a monopoly. This is where you as a responsible administrator come in. If you demand that the merger only be allowed if rural areas are guaranteed the same rate as all other areas of the country then rural areas will then benefit from the competition of cable versus satellite in the urban areas and we all will win. The only ones who will not win are the cable companies that currently have no full competition in their areas.