

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you today as a current Dish Network subscriber who would like to add my voice of support to the pending merger of EchoStar and DIRECTV.

Over 10 years ago, cable television came to Powhatan County, Virginia. Our Board of Supervisors chose a company that promised that cable would be accessible to all in the county within 2 years. The farthest west that it made in the county is still about 10 miles east of our home. My husband and I came to the conclusion that we will never see cable make it to our part of the county. We just became Dish Network customers this past December. I had asked a lot of friends and coworkers what they were happy with. The feedback that I got from some DirectTV customers was not as glowing as Dish Network customers. Several, who had cable access in their part of the county, terminated that service and went to Dish Network and were much happier. I also did a lot of research on the internet to help in my decision. Dish Network has surpassed our expectations.

My husband and I would very much like to see our local channels available on satellite. Our reception is quite poor on some channels, but we don't care to fight our local channels to get a distant local channel of superior quality. With this proposed merger, the Richmond-Petersburg channels should then be available to us in the picture and audio quality that we have now become accustomed to on Dish Network.

This merger would also make possible, for rural Americans, such as myself, broadband internet access. Cable is out since it is miles away. DSL has not even made it into the county. For many rural Americans, it will be the only way to get broadband internet access. Since becoming a Dish Network customer this past December, I have seen that they do all that they can so that the customer knows that he is #1. That is quite refreshing, and I very much feel that they will handle this merger responsibly.

In the interest of improving our access to competitive television and Internet service, I urge you to lend your support to this merger.

Sincerely,

Leslie Payne
6485 Old Buckingham Road
Powhatan, VA 23139