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January 30, 2002

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

RE: Proceeding # 01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

My letter is being sent in support of the merger of DirectTV and EchoStar because of its potential benefits for improving the quality of health care services in rural states.

The clinic where I work as a medical physicist serves a client base in South Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota and Nebraska. These states have long pursued innovations which would bring the most advanced medical applications to medical providers, clinics and emergency personnel responding to crisis incidents in even the most remote portions of the states. One of the most exciting benefits the merger offers is the faster development of satellite-based wide band, high speed internet capabilities. For residents and medical care providers in the more remote areas of the Upper Midwest, the applications of the most competent satellite-based internet service would save lives and money.

There are some who seek to kill this merger by arguing it creates a concentration of media. By saying so, they disregard the fact that this industry is very young. This is not the same as merging telephone companies, cable TV companies and more traditional media. I also understand there are provisions in this merger which would protect consumers from undesirable pricing and service practices.

At home, I receive DirectTV service, and I am very satisfied with the variety and quality of the service. It is a vastly superior service to cable, and I look forward to this industry's forthcoming innovations. Please support the merger. Consumers are the ultimate winners.

Yours very truly,

Jeffrey P. Masten