

It is my understanding that the Senate Judiciary Committee will be holding hearings on the merger of the EchoStar and Hughes satellite companies in the near future.

As you are aware, I represent a largely rural State Senate district in western Wisconsin. Several of my constituents have contacted me to voice their support for this merger, hoping it will improve programming and increase local channel availability to rural areas of our State.

Many residents in western Wisconsin are not able to receive a network signal via a home antenna and are not currently being served by cable television lines. This leaves satellite as the only viable option for many families.

It is always a challenge to keep the schools, businesses, and homes of rural America equal to their urban counterparts in the ever-advancing world of technology. This merger will aid in that effort by increasing the flow of information at a competitive price to the consumer.

On behalf of the constituents that have contacted me regarding this issue, I urge you to support this merger.

Thank you for your attention in this matter. Should you have any questions, comments or concerns, I would enjoy discussing this matter further with you.