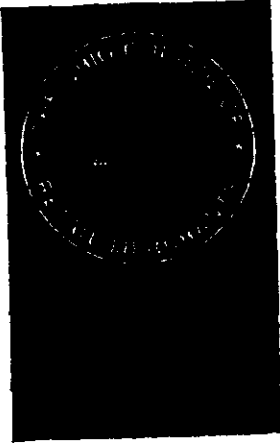


ORIGINAL



EXECUTIVE STAFF
John C. Mahoney, Jr.
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Adriana A. Stelich
 Vice-President
Janet R. Wardlow
 Assistant Corporate Secretary/
 Controller
Lawrence J. Steizer, Jr.
 General Counsel
Lora L. Miller
 Governmental Affairs Director
Joshua R. Sanders
 Public Affairs Director

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 Grand Rapids, MI

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
 OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

February 4, 2002

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

01-3481

Dear Chairman Powell:

The Ohio Council of Retail Merchants would like to go on record as strongly endorsing the proposed sale of Hughes Electronics Corp./DirecTV to EchoStar Communications Corp.

Among our members are many retailers who provide either DirecTV or EchoStar's DISH Network service to Ohio customers. Also, many of our members use satellite television for their businesses, and the prospects of a stronger, merged company with greater resources and the capacity to deliver more options to customers - in this case, our members - has great appeal.

We are especially intrigued at the possibilities for broadband use via satellite. The post-merger company will have a much better ability to provide high-speed Internet access, and given the importance of the Internet we are strongly in favor of any combination that increases broadband options for consumers and businesses.

We hope you will use your position as an influential representative to support the merger and move the approval process forward. This is a deal that makes good sense for consumers, including many of our members.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John C. Mahoney, Jr.
 President, CEO

Joshua Sanders
 Legislative Affairs Director

COUNCIL AFFILIATES

Merchant Services, Inc. • Ohio Jewelers Association • Ohio Association of Convenience Stores • Ohio Automatic Merchandising Association • Ohio Bakers Association
 Ohio Association of Wholesaler - Distributors • Ohio Association of McDonald's Operators • Ohio Tire Dealers & Retreaders Association