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APR 29 2002

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of Secretary

82-26319

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Mr. Michael K. Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Powell:

The pending merger of EchoStar and DirecTV has the potential to revolutionize the country's communications market. I write to ask for your commitment to ensure the FCC's careful consideration and expeditious review of the many benefits this merger would bring America's consumers.

I believe this merger is in the best interests of consumers because it would open up a new level of competition between satellite and cable within the pay-TV market. Consumers would receive the benefits of new programming, expanded coverage of local channels, and the delivery of high-speed Internet access and other broadband services via satellite.

Furthermore, the proposed merger has the potential to help bridge the so-called "digital divide" between urban and rural residents. The combined company will be able to provide much-needed high-speed satellite Internet and broadband services to rural America.

In view of its potential benefits to consumers and technological innovation, it is my sincere hope that your agency will grant this pending merger a fair hearing and timely approval.

Sincerely,

Bill Owens

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