



January 25, 2002

Chairmen Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington D.C. 20554

Dear Chairmen Powell:

I have been following the Echostar/Hughes Merger over the past few months and I believe that this transaction will provide significant benefits to many rural customers.

Echostar Communications has continually proved itself in our fast paced world of technology and has focused on providing customers with state-of-the-art equipment, systems, and service. It is incomprehensible to think some businesses and school systems are still left behind because of the "digital divide" that exists between urban and rural areas. This merger will break that "digital divide" and offer Americans, rural and urban, the same access to high speed Internet, more program channels, and video on demand. In overcoming this barrier of access, homes, businesses, and schools, our area will benefit economically, financially, and academically.

The Echostar and Hughes merger will provide many services that other cable companies cannot or will not provide and will provide the economies of scale and buying power to expand their services. Their nationwide pricing plan offers customers more for their money. It's benefits are overwhelming and I urge you to consider this merger seriously.

Sincerely,

Amy Pastor, Director
Church Point Chamber of Commerce

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