

The Honorable Michael K. Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

Wouldn't this technology be great for your constituents in Rural America or any where in the world. This was sent to me by znet>

> Why the EchoStar-DirectTV deal is good for your health  
> By Guest Columnist, AnchorDesk  
> March 31, 2002 9:00 PM PT  
> URL:  
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> When we hear the words 'falling from the sky,' our instinctive  
> reaction is to duck our heads and run for cover. However, recent  
> advances in satellite communications could allow better health  
> care to drop into our doctors' offices.

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> Imagine a woman in a rural community that is too small to have a  
> first-class breast clinic having her mammography results analyzed  
> instantly by experts at a top institute such as New York's  
> Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Or consider the cost  
> savings if patients with chronic conditions--who account for 79  
> percent of today's health care spending--could be monitored with  
> digital connections that instantly alert their doctors to a  
> problem.

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> HERE'S ANOTHER scenario: What if two-way broadband connections  
> could allow physicians to conduct the virtual equivalent of an  
> office examination by monitoring a patient's EKG, blood pressure,  
> and other vital signs? At the same time, accompanying  
> videoconferencing technology would let the doctor see and talk  
> with the patient, who could rest comfortably at home instead of  
> enduring the stress and expense of an office visit.

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> This is hardly a gaze into a Buck Rogers future. Telemedicine  
> applications like this are being performed right now.  
> Unfortunately, they are rare, because the broadband connections  
> necessary to do so require obtaining and installing expensive  
> private-line connections and equipment.

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> Would you have thought that a merger proposal between two  
> communications companies could become a prescription for  
> high-quality, accessible health care? Maybe not. But the  
> long-awaited joining of satellite TV carriers EchoStar  
> Communications and DirectTV could become exactly that.

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> The combined broadcast spectrum of these two companies would allow  
> the merged company to deliver high-speed data capacity via  
> satellite to every home, hospital, and doctor's office in the U.S.  
> This widespread reach of broadband would finally make the promise  
> of telemedicine available to millions of Americans.

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> JUST WHAT IS telemedicine? It combines voice, data, and video  
> connections to link patients with the medical services they need,  
> even if the providers of those services are hundreds or even  
> thousands of miles away.  
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> For example, my own work involves implanting in a patient a device  
> that delivers a small electrical impulse in the brain to reduce  
> the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. In the near future, I hope to  
> be able to 'visit' a patient and adjust the settings of their  
> brain-stimulating device over a high-speed Internet connection.  
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> While telemedicine holds great promise and trial applications have  
> proved dramatically effective, the lack of widespread affordable  
> broadband connections, particularly in rural areas, is a serious  
> stumbling block.  
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> This standoff between the potential benefits of telemedicine and  
> the lack of broadband connections could end quickly if the Federal  
> Communications Commission and the Department of Justice give their  
> respective blessings to the merger.  
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> ANY HOME with one of those pizza-sized satellite dishes could  
> become an extension of a teaching hospital or specialist's office.  
> Small-town doctors or rural health clinics could reach out to  
> physicians anywhere in the country to examine their patients or  
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Sincerely,

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