

DAVID PRICE
4TH DISTRICT
NORTH CAROLINA

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

April 4, 2002

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MP
EchoStar
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1579

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing in regard to the proposed merger of Hughes Electronics and EchoStar that is currently under review by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

I am particularly concerned about the potential impact of the merger on residents of rural areas who currently subscribe to direct broadcast satellite (DBS) service and may not have alternative telecommunications options. Although EchoStar has committed to maintaining a nationwide pricing plan that would limit costs for rural customers, there are also quality and breadth of service issues that must be addressed. I urge you to keep the potential impact of the proposed merger on rural areas at the forefront as the FCC evaluates the merits of the proposed merger.

In addition, I have heard concerns from the North Carolina Association of Broadcasters that the merger would significantly alter their ability to negotiate for carriage of local television broadcast signals. I urge you to carefully consider this aspect of the proposed merger as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

DAVID PRICE
Member of Congress

DP:dn

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