

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

I moved to Montana last year and was disappointed to learn that I am unable to receive any local television broadcast signals via satellite. In my opinion Montana broadcasters were doing a disservice to their intended market by not making their signals available via satellite since a majority of Montana's rural viewers rely on satellite service for TV coverage of local news and events. In addition, Montana advertisers were losing access to their intended market by this same shortcoming.

I was very pleased to learn of the pending merger of Echostar and DirectTV and I am writing to you today as a current satellite TV subscriber who would like to add my voice of support to the merger of EchoStar and DIRECTV. The combination of these two satellite providers will provide numerous benefits to consumers like me, including more choices in channels, programming, broadband and new television technologies.

By merging, the combined company will be a much stronger competitor to cable television and can offer more programming choices and, most importantly, all local TV channels in every market in the U.S. By providing local TV channels everywhere, this merger will make satellite television a strong alternative to cable in our community. Throughout the country, people will now be able to turn to satellite TV to access their local news, weather and community information, in addition to a comprehensive package of national video programming. But just as exciting, the merger will bring the availability of affordable high-speed Internet service by satellite to over 40 million Americans who don't have high-speed Internet access. These tremendous benefits to consumers won't happen without the merger. Satellite-delivered Internet service will bring an affordable and competitive alternative to cable modems and DSL to consumers in big cities, small towns and rural areas alike. This will give me a competitive choice for Internet access and will be especially advantageous to rural communities where cable modems and DSL are not likely to be available anytime in the near future.

In the interest of improving our access to competitive television and Internet service, I urge you to lend your support to this merger.

Sincerely,

Richard McGill
PO Box 235
Philipsburg, MT 59858