

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

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you today as a current satellite TV subscriber who would like to add my voice of support to the pending merger of EchoStar and DIRECTV.

My two major gripes are lack of local channels and improvement over dialup internet service.

I live in a rural area and cannot get traditional cable service. I was able to receive feeds of distance networks for a time with Direct TV, but my networks were taken away from me.

I can watch anything I want (including adult channels) but somebody decided I should not be able to watch the Today Show out of New York in crystal clarity vs. my local channel blurred !!!

Because of my rural location, I cannot access the internet with better than a 24,000 bps connection, which is terrible for normal page viewing, let alone downloading information.

The combination of these two satellite providers will provide numerous benefits to consumers like me. 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.

I already have an interactive receiver which lets me choose a local city for weather information. 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 fact, after reading an article in the local paper, I contacted SBC Ameritech about DSL service and the representative actually laughed at me when I asked when this service might become available to our rural area!

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

Sincerely,

Lisa Valentine  
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Fairgrove, MI 48733