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Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington, DC 20554
Ref: Number: 01-348

Dear Chairman Powell:

Over the past 20-years, Echostar has demonstrated numerous industry firsts and I firmly believe that the merger of Hughes Electronics and Echostar Communications Corporation would provide significant benefits to consumers everywhere.

The new company will be able to effectively compete in an environment against other dominant US cable companies. Right now only consumers located in urban areas are offered a choice between satellite and cable; people in rural areas do not always have a choice. With the merger, the new company will be able to offer local channels through satellite to all of its' customers, something it is currently unable to do.

The digital divide that exists in today's fast growing world must be eliminated. High-speed Internet access will be provided via satellite to many rural areas, especially businesses and schools that do not have access to cable modem service or DSL. This merger will help bridge the digital divide without the need for government loans that are currently being requested by various cable and telephone providers.

Echostar's nationwide pricing plan offers, customers a fair package of options, including more programming choices, interactive services and video on demand, at competitive prices.

Everyday new and improved technology comes out and it is up to us to continue to support our fast growing world. I urge you to seriously consider this merger and all of the good that will come out of these two companies coming together.

Sincerely,

Morris H. Weinstein

MHW/bd