



## Congressman José E. Serrano

Chairman, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government

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### **Serrano Questions FCC Head Kevin Martin on XM-Sirius Merger, Extracts Multiple Commitments**

April 9, 2008 – Washington, DC – Today, Congressman José E. Serrano questioned the Federal Communications Commission Chairman, Kevin Martin, on a variety of issues, extracting commitments to look at several issues regarding the potential XM-Sirius merger.

“I asked Chairman Martin a variety of questions, but felt that we really made progress on the issues I see surrounding the possible XM-Sirius merger,” said Serrano, who is the Chair of the House Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, which oversees the budget of the FCC. “I am supportive of this merger and sought to ensure that consumers are not harmed and that service is expanded rather than reduced.”

Serrano asked Martin if “consumers will be forced to buy new equipment if a merger were to occur” because he was “concerned about the effect this would have.” Martin replied that this would be an issue the FCC would examine as it considers this merger.

XM and Sirius are largely unavailable in the U.S. territories, which is something that has always concerned Chairman Serrano who uses his Appropriations Chairmanship to remind agency heads to remember to include everyone who lives under the U.S. flag. Serrano asked Martin if the FCC “would consider requiring as a term of the merger that service be expanded to include the territories.” Martin replied that it would also be an issue the FCC would scrutinize, and agreed that it was a problem that the territories are often left out of service coverage in many areas. Serrano said he “often wonders whether the territories are intentionally left out or just forgotten about” and vowed to “do everything he can to ensure that they are treated fairly and with respect.”

Serrano also asked Martin if the merged company would be subjected to FCC broadcast decency rules. Martin said that the FCC had no plans to do so.

Finally Serrano asked Martin if the FCC would “ensure diversity in programming” in a merger situation, noting that he “feels that we should move to support diversity in programming and hosts.” Martin answered that he was certain that the FCC was committed to diversity too, and would look into this issue as well.

“I’m satisfied that Chairman Martin will seek to address the issues that I raised today regarding the merger,” Serrano concluded. “We must be very cautious in this type of large scale merger that consumers of all backgrounds and locations have their interests considered and protected.”

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*Congressman José E. Serrano has represented the Bronx in Congress since 1990. He is the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government.*