

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JONATHAN S. ADELSTEIN**

Re: Second Periodic Review of the Commission's Rules and Policies Affecting the Conversion to Digital Television: Second Report and Order, MB Docket No. 03-15, RM 9832

I whole-heartedly support this *Order* mandating that anyone who chooses to sell devices, primarily televisions, with analog-only tuners must legibly and conspicuously display a consumer advisory label on or closely next to those devices, informing consumers they will no longer receive over-the-air broadcast signals without a converter box or other digital service after February 17, 2009. I have advocated for some time that the Commission require retailers to provide consumers with standardized information about the digital transition at points-of-sale. I am thrilled we are finally taking action on this. This is one step toward achieving my digital transition consumer education plan.

For the past decade, retailers and manufacturers have known about the impending transition. Unfortunately, their recent voluntary efforts to educate consumers about the transition have proven insufficient. Numerous studies have shown that the public is not aware that their analog TV sets are about to go dark. Meanwhile, the Commission has simply failed to step up our efforts until today.

I believe the Commission is uniquely suited, and indeed obligated, to address the paucity of information and lack of public awareness about the transition. Congress, in the All Channel Receiver Act, authorized the Commission to "make such rules and regulations" necessary to fulfill its obligation to promote the orderly transition to digital television, but we have yet to take significant action towards fulfilling this mandate. The Commission should encourage more public service announcements on analog and pay-televisions services, conduct more targeted outreach to insular communities, establish benchmarks for industry stakeholders, and impose public interest obligations on DTV broadcasters.

We can no longer rely solely on the websites, such as www.dtv.gov, to inform Americans about the transition. Not everyone has access to the Internet, and not everyone with Internet access will visit these educational websites. Local officials and organizations may be best positioned to conduct help reach these citizens. The Commission should hold regional seminars to train members of public interest organizations in local communities about the digital transition and how to get the word out to their communities. In addition, we should take advantage of the media ownership and localism holdings that we host to educate the American public about the approaching digital transition.

With 664 days left until transition, if the Commission and the National Telecommunications and Information Agency do not work closely together to develop a unified national message, a clear chain of command, and an effective consumer education

plan, I fear that both agencies, as well as Congress and industry stakeholders, will witness a tsunami of consumer complaints.

Hence, while I very much support this *Order*, it is only one step in the right direction and much more needs to be done to prepare the American public for the dramatic finale on February 17, 2009.