

**Remarks of Chairman Kevin J. Martin**  
**Digital Television Consumer Education Workshop**  
**FCC Headquarters**  
**Washington, DC**  
**September 26, 2007**

I would like to thank all of you for coming here today to our digital television consumer education workshop. I want to emphasize that our workshop today is about the consumer.

The Commission's highest priority is protecting the American consumer. We intend to take whatever actions are necessary to minimize the potential burden the digital transition could impose on consumers and maximize their ability to benefit from it. The Commission has already taken some important steps but there is still more we need to do. This is where all of you come in.

Today, we are fortunate to be hearing from a wide range of consumer groups. We will listen closely to what they have to say. And, we will be hearing from industry and government representatives who will update us on their efforts to inform consumers about the transition.

I would like to take a minute to commend the industries for the recent consumer education campaigns that they have initiated. I believe that it is not too soon to start informing the public about the upcoming transition. This is why our workshop today is so important.

Importantly, although this is our first workshop, it will not be our last. Rather, this is the first in a series of workshops that we will host. Each of our upcoming workshops will be focused on a specific consumer segment. A number of communities have been identified as being likely to be disproportionately impacted by the transition and least aware of it. These communities include the elderly, the disabled, low-income earners, those living in rural areas, minorities and non-English speakers. Through a series of workshops in the upcoming months, we will specifically focus on how we can best reach and educate these groups of consumers.

Facilitating a smooth transition is not going to be easy. As all major changes tend to be, the coming transition to digital television transmission is an exciting—but complicated—revolution. There are obvious benefits to digital technology – such as the movie quality picture and sound.

And - something I find particularly exciting - the switch from analog to digital will also enable local broadcasters to provide multiple streams of programming. These multiple streams are capable of providing consumers more local programming and vital information about their communities. For example, the Association of Public Television

Stations is here today and is showing examples of digital programming that is available to consumers as a result of multicasting.

While the benefits offered by digital technology are undeniable, so are the challenges. We are here today to talk about the questions that need to be answered and the challenges that need to be met. A successful completion of the digital transition depends upon government and industry working together to promote consumer awareness and minimize the burdens borne by consumers. There are many important policies that must be put into place. The Commission is committed to ensuring that no American is left in the dark.

To this end, we are working, and will continue to work, with all of you – government agencies, industry, and consumer groups – to mount an aggressive education campaign. I assure you that I, and my fellow colleagues – all of whom you will hear from today – are taking our consumer education responsibilities very seriously and are dedicated to doing everything in our ability to ensure a smooth digital transition. Just next week, the record will close in our DTV Education NPRM where we seek comment on whether to require the industry to use bill inserts, public service announcements, and other techniques to educate consumers about the transition. I hope that the Commission is able to complete this proceeding quickly.

I know that all of us in this room are united in a single goal - protecting consumers by ensuring they are aware of and prepared for the digital transition. I look forward to hearing your concerns, ideas and thoughts about how we can best work together to make sure all Americans benefit from the digital revolution. I hope that this workshop is a productive one that allows us to strengthen existing partnerships and create new ones.

Finally, I urge all of you to take some time to view the demonstrations and exhibits that we have assembled here today. The technical demonstrations will allow you to see first hand the exciting features of digital technology and also learn how to use a converter box. And, other exhibitors have brought many useful materials about the transition.

Thanks to all of you for participating in our conference today. I am pleased that we were able to bring so many of you together from the industry, consumer advocacy groups, and government agencies. And, thank you to all of the dedicated public servants in the Consumer and Government Affairs Bureau who have worked so hard to organize today's workshop.