

**Remarks of Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate
To DTV Workshop on Persons with Disabilities
February 28, 2008**

Good Morning. I am so glad to be here, and so glad this group has convened to discuss what we all agree is one of the FCC's **top** priorities—the DTV transition. As you are certainly aware, the transition will occur in just 355 days! Like so many revolutionary changes, the success of this transition depends on preparation, coordination, and commitment. And the best place to start is with what you are doing today—education. I appreciate the work of the FCC's DTV Task Force, which continues to hold these forums to target specific segments of the population most at risk during the DTV transition—from seniors, to non-English-speakers, to today's focus on individuals with disabilities. I hope that this targeted approach to outreach and education will help us achieve our goal of a seamless transition in which every American wakes up to find February 17, 2009 a day like any other.

Approximately half of all American households that have televisions still have analog-only sets. If they aren't in the living room, they may be in a guest room or the basement—I know the Tate's have certainly moved tv sets from one room to another over the years! It is important that we educate viewers on the need to prepare every set in their home for the upcoming transition.

These are major portions of our society that depend on over-the-air broadcasts for their weather, sports, politics, community events, and most importantly, emergency alerts. We cannot leave them in the dark, which is why your involvement is so critical.

We must make educational materials available to them; we must hold seminars in their communities, not just here in Washington, to explain the steps they need to take to be ready; and we must continue to remind them how soon this change is coming.

I applaud the efforts of the DTV Task Force, which is working to prepare those with disabilities by making our educational materials available both in Braille and an audio format. Additionally, in an effort to reach every citizen, in every corner of the country, we have produced educational materials in 11 languages and in large print. We are sending teams around the country to cities big and small, and I am personally speaking about the transition everywhere I go—I'm doing an interview with a Chicago radio broadcaster this afternoon and going to Maryland tomorrow to help spread the word.

The FCC, NTIA, government leaders across the country, and those of you here today are responding to the call for leaders to step forward and take action. Thank you for your efforts and I look forward to working with you as we approach the DTV transition on February 17, 2009.