

**Written Statement
Of**

**The Honorable Kevin J. Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission**

**Before the
United States Senate
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation**

April 8, 2008

Good morning Chairman Inouye, Vice Chairman Stevens, and Members of the Committee. Thank you for inviting me here today to update you on the status of the digital transition.

On February 17, 2009, all full power television stations in this country will stop broadcasting in analog, and broadcast exclusively in digital, as mandated by Congress in the Digital Television and Public Safety Act of 2005. A successful digital transition will depend upon minimizing the burdens placed on consumers and maximizing their ability to benefit from it.

The DTV transition will be a historic moment in the evolution of TV. Television viewers will be able to enjoy movie quality picture and sound and potentially new programming choices. It also will allow us to significantly improve public safety communications and will usher in a new era of advanced wireless services such as the widespread deployment of wireless broadband.

According to recent data from the Consumer Electronics Association and the National Association of Broadcasters, consumer awareness of the transition has grown. It is up 80% from 41% consumer awareness in August 2006 to 74% consumer awareness in January 2008, according to CEA, and NAB reports it has more than doubled since 2007. And recent surveys published by NAB and Consumers Union found 79% and 64% of consumers were aware of the transition respectively. More recently (in March), the Association of Public Television Stations (APTS) issued the findings to a survey it

conducted in February indicating that consumer awareness of the transition increased from 51% to 76% in just three months (November 2007 to February 2008). In addition APTS finds that: “Roughly 62 percent of ... over-the-air consuming households who are aware of the transition indicated that they would buy a converter box or digital TV set between now and when the transition takes effect...” which is up dramatically since November 2006, when only “28 percent of over-the-air households said they would take those options.”

That more and more viewers are aware of the transition is a step in the right direction. However, we still have more work to do. Specifically, the Consumers Union also found that 74% of consumers have “major misconceptions” about the impact of the transition on them. In other words, too many Americans remain confused about what they need to do to prepare for it. And APTS finds that “17.5 percent of over-the-air consumers who are aware of the transition ‘don’t know’ what they will do and roughly 10 percent said they would ‘do nothing.’” Taken together, these surveys are valuable research tools to better guide our education and outreach efforts over the next ten months.

This recently released data also demonstrates that facilitating a successful DTV transition is an enormous undertaking. And it is one which no single entity, public or private, can achieve alone. Rather it requires the commitment and cooperation of government, industry and consumer groups. We have made that commitment and are actively working with these important stakeholders.

In February, I participated in an event marking one year before the transition at a local Best Buy store which sells digital televisions and is currently selling digital to analog converter boxes. Commerce Secretary Gutierrez, Meredith Baker and I were joined there by top representatives of the nation's broadcasters, cable operators, and the consumer electronics industry. We are working together, along with others inside and outside of government, in an unprecedented public-private partnership to educate consumers throughout the country. Today's hearing is a welcome opportunity to discuss our work with all of our DTV partners both in terms of outreach and education and necessary regulatory steps to ensure all Americans can share the benefits of this historic digital transition.

UPDATE ON BROADCASTERS TRANSITION TO DIGITAL

Last August, the Commission adopted the final DTV table of allotments based on the channel elections made by the full power broadcast stations. This order provided virtually all (over 99%) of the television stations across the country with their final channel assignments for broadcasting in digital following the DTV transition. By finalizing broadcasters' channel allotments, the Commission helped ensure that broadcasters could begin making final preparations for their own conversion.

Nearly two-thirds of full power stations (1180) will remain on the same channel they are currently using for digital service. Most of these stations, over 1030, have completed construction and are already providing full service to their viewers. The remainder, roughly 150, are working on completing construction of their full service facilities. One-

third of full power stations, (roughly 635), are changing channels for their operation after the transition and are currently filing construction permit applications, ordering equipment, and scheduling tower crews.

In December of 2007, we also concluded the Third DTV Periodic Review. This Order adopted the procedures and rules to guide broadcasters through the end of the transition. Among other important decisions, this order adopted the interference standard for post-transition applications and forecast the date, later this year, when the Commission will consider requests from broadcasters to expand their service area.

In the Third DTV Periodic Review, the Commission recognized that stations will need flexibility to complete the transition. Consequently we adopted procedures that will allow broadcasters to adjust their buildout according to their needs and the needs of their viewers. For example, we will consider requests from broadcasters that find it necessary to reduce analog service before the transition date, but they will be required to inform their viewers well in advance of any reductions.

In addition to getting the proper rules in place, it is important that broadcasters' progress be carefully monitored. Accordingly, to enable the Commission to closely track broadcasters' progress toward completing their transition, we required each station to file a report on the status of the construction of its post transition facility. All stations have submitted the first such report, and over 1,000 indicated that they were completely finished with their DTV transition. Broadcasters are required to update the Commission

with any changes to their status as events warrant. In the Third Periodic, the Commission committed to send Congress a full report on broadcasters' DTV build-out in August. Broadcasters that have not completed their transition must report again by October 20, 2008.

CARRIAGE OF DIGITAL SIGNALS

Much of the focus of our consumer education efforts has been on the approximately 15% of the homes who rely on over-the-air broadcast signals. These efforts have presumed that subscribers to cable and satellite will continue to be able to receive digital broadcast signals just as they do analog broadcast signals today. It is critical to note, however, that our rules needed to be modified to clarify that cable and satellite companies were required to carry digital broadcast signals to their customers just as they do the analog broadcast signals today. Our goal with both of these Orders was not to expand carriage but rather to ensure that the broadcasters' switch from analog to digital was not used as an excuse to stop carrying the broadcasters' signal in a format that could be viewed by all subscribers, including analog cable subscribers.

Last fall, the Commission adopted an order that guarantees that analog cable subscribers will not be left in the cold once broadcasters ceased broadcasting in analog. Specifically, the Commission took action to ensure that after the transition, cable operators will continue to make every broadcast station's signal viewable, as the statute requires. As a result, we significantly reduced the number of Americans potentially needing a converter

box to watch broadcast stations post-transition. Making sure the almost 35 million households that subscribe to analog cable will be able to continue to watch broadcast television after the transition as they did before allows us to focus our energies on assisting the nearly 15 million households that rely exclusively on over-the-air signals.

The Commission recently adopted an order that will enable satellite subscribers to receive digital broadcast signals, as well. The law had required that when a satellite operator chooses to carry any local broadcast signals, it must carry all full power local broadcast signals in that market. The item recently adopted clarifies that, in such a “local-into-local” market, where a full power television station is broadcasting only in digital, the satellite operator must carry that digital signal upon request. This clarification is critical to ensuring that satellite customers, like cable customers, will continue to receive the same broadcast stations they saw the day before the transition on the day after the transition.

ENFORCEMENT

The Commission’s DTV-related enforcement efforts have focused on protecting consumers from unknowingly buying televisions that won’t receive broadcast stations following the transition. Specifically, we are enforcing three rules: 1) the requirement to label any remaining televisions with analog-only tuners; 2) the prohibition on the importation and shipment of television receivers without integrated digital tuners; and 3) the requirement that the V-Chip functions with the digital technology.

With respect to the Commission's labeling requirement, the Commission has, as of April 7, 2008, inspected 2176 retail stores and 36 websites and issued 347 citations notifying retailers of violations for failing to comply with our requirements. Because retailers are not licensees, we must give them a citation prior to issuing a Notice of Apparent Liability (NAL). In July 2007, we circulated to the Commissioners' offices NALs against seven of the largest retailers. In October 2007, we circulated another seven NALs against retailers. All 14 of these NALs, which contain fines totaling nearly \$5 million in the aggregate, are currently scheduled to be considered at our April open meeting later this week. In addition to these 14 NALs, the Enforcement Bureau has issued another seven NALs worth an additional \$104,000. It is my hope that through our vigorous enforcement actions, retailers will take concrete actions to avoid consumer confusion as the digital transition draws near.

In addition to our labeling investigations, we are continuing to ensure that no manufacturers are importing and shipping analog-only television receivers and equipment. We have issued NALs against two companies - Syntax Brilliant Corp. (approx. \$2.9 million) and Regent USA, Inc. (\$63,650) - for apparent violation of our rules in this area. One of these companies has already paid the fine and a forfeiture order with respect to the other company is scheduled to be considered at the Commission's April agenda meeting. In March, we circulated an NAL against an additional manufacturer and this item is also on the agenda for the April meeting.

Finally, we are ensuring that the digital tuners comply with the V-Chip regulations. As you know, the Commission's rules require digital television manufacturers to include the

V-Chip in their equipment and to ensure that their devices can adjust to changes in the content advisory system. We began investigating allegations that some manufacturers were not complying with our rules. As a result of these investigations we released an NAL against Funai Corporation. In October 2007, we circulated NALs against an additional seven manufacturers. Nine NALs, which contain fines totaling over \$6.5 million, are scheduled to be considered at the Commission's April agenda meeting later this week.

In addition, FCC Field agents soon will begin to visit retailer stores to assess their employee training and consumer education efforts regarding the DTV transition.

Swift enforcement of all our DTV-related rules is critical to protecting consumers and reducing potential confusion. Our activities in this area will continue to be a priority during the next 10 months.

CONSUMER EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

In order to educate consumers properly, all parties involved in the transition - - the FCC, NTIA, the broadcasters, the cable industry, satellite, manufacturers, retailers, consumer groups - - need to work together to educate consumers.

I commend the industry for the consumer education campaigns that they have initiated. Specifically, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) launched a \$700 million campaign that includes, among other things, television spots, 30 minute education programs about DTV and a 100-day countdown to the February 17, 2009 deadline. In

addition, the National Cable and Telecommunications Association (NCTA) launched a \$200 million campaign that includes, among other things, sending customer communication “tool kits” to all their cable systems nationwide, and distributing brochures about the transition at community and public events.

In February, the Commission adopted an Order that requires commercial and noncommercial full power broadcasters to provide on-air information to their viewers about the DTV transition by compliance with one of three alternative sets of rules. Although the sets of requirements are distinct, all require PSAs and the Commission found that they each entail a similar level of commitment and engagement on the part of broadcasters. For example, where the first option calls for more frequent PSAs, the second calls for longer ones, and the third for the same total amount of education but more flexibility regarding PSA length. All plans require quarterly reporting of both mandatory and voluntary outreach and education efforts. This will allow the Commission not only to monitor compliance, but also to stay informed of the creative approaches being taken by disparate broadcasters all over the country, and continue to coordinate transition education efforts.

The item also requires MVPDs to provide monthly inserts about the DTV transition in their customer billing statements. Phone companies participating in the Low Income Federal Universal Service Program also must provide notice of the transition to their low income customers and potential customers. The item also requires manufacturers of television receivers and related devices to provide notice to consumers of the transition’s

impact on that equipment. In addition, we require the partners listed on the Commission's dtv.gov website such as NAB, NCTA, CEA and CERC, as well as the winners of the 700 MHz auction, to provide the Commission with quarterly updates on their consumer education efforts. Finally, the item states that we will work with the National Telecommunications and Information Agency (NTIA) to ensure that the retailers participating in the converter box program are appropriately training their employees and informing consumers.

In addition to our DTV Consumer Education item, the Commission is actively and directly promoting consumer awareness of the upcoming transition through its own education and outreach efforts.

The FCC's consumer outreach effort places an emphasis on consumers who receive their television signals "over-the-air" and on those who are hard to reach and may be unaware of the upcoming transition, including senior citizens; non-English speaking and minority communities; people with disabilities; low-income individuals; and people living in rural and tribal areas.

We have been forging partnerships, participating in media events, and attending conferences, to get the word out.

For example, in the beginning of July, DTV education posters will be displayed in all 34,000 post offices across the nation. The United States Postal Service estimates that an average of 9 million people pass through their post office lobbies each day.

We have also secured commitments from 25 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico to display DTV materials in 1100 Department of Motor Vehicle locations. Specifically, we have secured commitments with Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

The FCC also distributed DTV transition awareness information that is being provided to all federal government employees. We estimate that this message will reach over 2.5 million federal employees throughout the country.

In addition, we have identified and contacted 150 mayoral offices in areas of the country with high concentrations of over-the-air households, to help them educate consumers in their communities. These efforts have thus far resulted in 29 cities making specific commitments ranging from posting and distributing DTV information in public locations and at events and conferences, to including information in newsletters and other publications, and establishing links to our dtv.gov website, and other efforts unique to their communities. For example, the Mayor's Office in Great Falls, Montana has

requested 21,000 DTV flyers from us to send to their utility customers along with their utility bills.

We also reached out to the country's major professional sports leagues and have received offers to help promote the transition. The National Football League (NFL), the National Basketball Association (NBA), the National Hockey League (NHL), Major League Baseball (MLB) and NASCAR all agreed to help raise awareness of the transition among their fans. For example, the NHL has agreed to run ten 30 second PSAs per day until the transition date on their cable channel the NHL Network.

Since the last time I appeared before you, Congress has allocated additional money to the Commission to spend on our consumer education efforts. We intend to put these resources to good use as these additional funds will allow the Commission to expand upon its current consumer outreach and education plan.

In February, a contract was awarded to Ketchum to support a broad range of consumer education services, including media services, publications, and distribution, that will assist and complement the FCC's ongoing work on educating all American consumers about the digital television transition. Ketchum has provided design recommendations to make our DTV messaging, including DTV.gov, more consumer-friendly. Other efforts through Ketchum will include billboards in targeted markets, grocery store outreach, and production of television and radio Public Service Announcements. Ketchum arranged a Satellite Media Tour in February on local television news around the country in states

such as Hawaii, Missouri, Texas and Florida to spread the message about the transition. From those seventeen interviews, which were aired between February 22 and March 2, Ketchum reported more than one million audience impressions. Ketchum will be arranging similar interviews throughout the transition to continue our consumer education efforts.

As I mentioned, we also know that some consumers will be disproportionately impacted by the transition or are harder to reach than the population at large. Therefore we have been taking specific steps to reach these groups. I would like to take a few minutes to describe our efforts targeted at each of these five communities.

Senior Citizens:

Senior citizens are more likely to have analog television sets and rely exclusively on over-the-air broadcasting. We have partnered with organizations that specifically serve this harder to reach population. Last September, we presented two DTV education sessions at the national AARP convention in Boston, and we have plans to make similar presentations at this year's convention in Washington, DC. In addition, late last fall, I was interviewed about the transition on AARP radio which is broadcast on 170 outlets nationwide reaching more than 1,000,000 people. I was also interviewed for, and quoted in the January/February issue of AARP's widely circulated Magazine, which has a circulation of 23.5 million. AARP is also regularly including stories on the DTV Transition in their Monthly Bulletins. Further, AARP will be distributing DTV

information at a series of eight “road show” events they will hold around the country from June to September of this year.

In addition to working with AARP, we have also been working with other senior organizations as well. For example, I taped a PSA for Retirement Living TV which reaches nearly 30 million homes nationwide. Also I participated in a story about the transition for the Erickson Tribune, which is distributed to residents in their retirement communities and is read by more than 6 million people. We are also pleased to be partnering with The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A) to cosponsor DTV awareness sessions during the coming year in conjunction with their 655 area offices throughout the nation. This is a useful opportunity to educate caregivers, social workers and others who care for the elderly in their communities.

In addition to working with these organizations, we have and continue to set up partnerships with many State Aging Offices. As a result of our efforts, 26 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have agreed to conduct DTV outreach with the FCC in varying capacities, including distributing DTV information at conferences and events.

Commission staff located in field offices throughout the country are also working on DTV transition education and outreach. Starting last year, FCC field agents have held DTV Awareness Sessions and distributed information to senior centers, libraries and other local venues frequented by older Americans. Through the work of our field agents,

we have been able to reach these consumers in a total of 44 states – ranging from Alaska to Florida. We have already distributed information to over 3033 senior centers, and 985 community centers, which frequently include large numbers of seniors, and given nearly 589 presentations with 113 more scheduled in the days ahead.

The FCC also held a DTV Workshop focusing on seniors at FCC Headquarters on November 8, 2007. It consisted of two panels discussing the transition’s effect on seniors plus exhibits hosted by other government and industry organizations. Based on the discussions and the relationships formed at that Workshop, we reached out to faith-based organizations, provided them with consumer education materials on the transition, and continue to follow up with them to answer questions on the transition.

And I’m pleased to announce that on May 28, 2008, along with Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, we will be hosting a DTV Town Hall Meeting for seniors in DC. We are working in conjunction with AARP, the DC Office of Aging, the NAB, and the National Caucus and Center for the Black Aged. The expected turnout is over 300 seniors from the District’s Aging community.

Non-English Speakers and Minorities:

We also know that the Hispanic community disproportionately relies on over-the-air television. Of the approximately 14.3 million broadcast-only homes, about 16.5% are headed by persons of Hispanic origin.

The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has agreed to join the Commission in conducting DTV awareness sessions at member chambers in the 15 U.S cities with the largest number of Hispanic TV homes. In addition, we have partnered with Univision to hold DTV awareness sessions at Town Hall meetings designed to educate members of its Spanish speaking audience. Through these partnerships, we will reach cities that are home to over 80% of Hispanic communities.

Additionally, we have taped several on-air interviews regarding the digital transition for Univision's news and public affairs programs airing both in local markets and nationally. These interviews were done by Keyla Hernandez-Ulloa the Commission staffer hired to spearhead outreach to the Hispanic community. We have been discussing the switch to digital on other Hispanic media outlets as well. For example, I did an interview with the Hispanic Communications Network, which produces material for radio, television, print and Internet, that will be distributed to its 230 member radio network in the United States and Puerto Rico.

We have also been working with other foreign language media outlets as well. To that end we have partnered with KTSF, a major Asian TV station in San Francisco. They have distributed 5,000 English and Chinese DTV one-page flyers at their booth during the Chinese New Year celebration events in late February. Approximately 100,000 people attended this festival. Also in conjunction with the California Public Utilities Commission, on May 22, 2008, we are participating with KTSF on a DTV educational panel for over 100 community leaders in San Francisco.

The FCC held a DTV Workshop focusing on non-English speakers and minorities on December 4, 2007. As a result of that Workshop, we will be working with the American Libraries Association to conduct a nationally available Internet seminar or “webinar” about the DTV transition today for librarians in the Webjunction Spanish Outreach Program. These librarians provide library services to Spanish speakers. Also, as a result of input received at the workshop, we translated our DTV one-page flyer into Hmong and Arabic (in addition to English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, French and Russian).

In addition, we plan to participate in a number of national conventions representing non-English speaking and minority consumers in 2008. They include the 78th Annual Conference for League of United Latin American Citizens, the Annual National Hispanic Leadership Conference and the National Council of La Raza Conference, the NAACP Convention, the National Urban League Conference and the Organization of Chinese Americans National Conference.

People with Disabilities:

The Commission is continuing a multi-faceted approach in informing people with disabilities about the DTV transition. On February 28, 2008, we hosted a DTV Workshop dedicated to issues facing people with disabilities. The program featured panelists from numerous organizations whose missions are to work directly with, and

advocate on behalf of, individuals with hearing, vision, speech, physical, and intellectual disabilities. It elicited several concrete suggestions that we have implemented.

For instance, in response to the panelists' suggestion that we develop "how to" information related to the transition, we have drafted a step-by-step guide on how to install a digital-to-analog converter box, and posted it on the Commission's DTV Web site, www.DTV.gov. Similarly, in response to general questions at the Workshop concerning the availability of video description (descriptions for people who are blind or have other vision disabilities about the setting and/or action in a program when information about these visual elements is not contained in the audio portion of the program), we are in the process of drafting a consumer advisory specifically addressing that issue.

Another suggestion from panelists was that we utilize national service organizations to inform consumers about the transition. Indeed, we have initiated a partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service, and with the United States Department of Agriculture's 4-H office. Finally, we will build upon our workshop by speaking directly to organizations that work with and on behalf of people with disabilities, at their meetings and conferences. For example, we are planning to attend the Summer Quarterly Meeting in Seattle of the National Council on Disabilities, which was represented at the February 28 Workshop.

I am also pleased to report that www.DTV.gov now features a DTV educational video in American Sign Language for the deaf and hard of hearing community. Our most commonly utilized publications are available in Braille and audio format and all of our fact sheets and advisories are available in large print. In addition, we have two specific publications addressing DTV and closed captioning, “Closed Captioning for Digital Television,” and Closed Captioning and Digital-to-Analog Converter Boxes for Viewing Free Over-the-Air Programming on Analog Televisions.” The Commission also has a dedicated email box for closed captioning questions at closedcaptioning@fcc.gov.

Commission staff continues to attend conferences to distribute DTV educational materials to people with disabilities. For example, the FCC has attended and provided DTV materials at the National Black Deaf Advocates Conference, the Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities Conference and the Emergency Planning and Response for Special Needs and Disabilities Conference.

In all, we are collaborating broadly with disability advocacy groups and outreach organizations. For instance, the Hearing Loss Association of America (“HLAA”) is already linking to our DTV informational materials on its website, which receives approximately one million hits per month. In addition, HLAA has committed to publish later this spring an article on DTV and closed captioning in *Hearing Loss Magazine*, which is estimated to reach a readership of 200,000 people. Likewise, later this spring the article will be published in the “Blue Book” Resource Guide of Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc. (“TDI”), with a readership of up to an estimated 100,000 people, and

eventually posted online at TDI's website, which receives approximately 88,000 hits per month.

Furthermore, HLAA has 200 local and regional chapters around the country, and we plan to conduct DTV Awareness Sessions at their monthly meetings throughout the course of the year. We recently conducted one in Yuma, Arizona on March 11, one in New Orleans on March 15, and we have another 16 scheduled through the fall. We also plan to utilize our Enforcement Bureau's Field Office staff and CGB staff to distribute DTV informational and educational materials at HLAA's "Walk4Hearing" events across the country taking place this spring through the fall.

Low Income Consumers:

The Commission is also taking specific steps to inform low-income consumers about the transition to all digital broadcasting. We have forged a partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services to assist the FCC in disseminating DTV material to target populations, including low-income consumers. HRSA (Health Resources and Services Administration) has forwarded FCC DTV information to approximately 4,000 grantee organizations, and the message also went out to groups like the state Primary Care Offices and Primary Care Associations and the National Association for Community Health Centers - organizations which represent many more non-Federally funded health centers and clinics nationwide. HRSA asked these organizations to post and distribute our DTV flyer in their clinics and to distribute information to patients. ACF (Administration for Children and Families) is distributing information through their 1,600

Head Start grantees, covering more than 18,000 centers around the country. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is distributing DTV flyers to approximately 50,000 individuals each month who call requesting information. Other HHS agencies are also distributing our flyers, displaying our posters and linking to our dtv.gov Web page.

We have contacted social worker associations in each of the 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and thus far have received commitments from over 20 of them to assist us in getting the word out about the DTV transition. These include publishing DTV information in their monthly newsletters, distributing DTV materials at events and conferences, and establishing conspicuous links to our website, www.dtv.gov, so that visitors to their web pages can obtain more detailed information about the DTV transition and the steps they may need to take to prepare for it.

We have also reached out to representatives of the state health departments in each of the 50 states and U.S. territories, and thus far have received commitments from 8 of them to assist in distributing DTV awareness materials to the consumers they interact with on a regular basis. These include, for example, posting DTV materials in their service and waiting areas, distributing our fact sheets and other publications at events attended by consumers, inserting DTV information in mailings to consumers, and establishing conspicuous links to our website, www.dtv.gov so that visitors to their web pages can obtain more detailed information about the DTV transition and the steps they may need to take to prepare for it.

In late February, we posted a simplified DTV one-page flyer on our Web site, and have offered it for distribution to all our partners. This was developed in response to requests for a more streamlined, non technical, and easy to read DTV informational flyer.

In addition, on April 1, 2008, the FCC sponsored a DTV Consumer Education Workshop focusing on reaching low-income consumers. As a result of our panel discussions, we received several positive suggestions and offers of assistance from our panelists on how best to reach members of their constituencies with information on the DTV transition. We will be providing the organizations represented with DTV informational materials such as our posters, flyers, and fact sheets that can be displayed at their events and facilities throughout the country. The National Energy Assistance Directors Association offered to provide DTV information to low income consumers who sign up for their program. We also received a suggestion to submit translated DTV articles to local foreign language publications in cities that have high concentrations of foreign language speakers. Often, these publications are the primary source of news and public interest information for these consumers. In addition, as noted earlier, all eligible telecommunications carriers (“ETCs”) that receive federal universal service funds are now required to provide DTV transition information in the monthly bills of their Lifeline/Link-Up customers.

Rural and Tribal Consumers:

The Commission is also taking specific steps to inform people living in rural areas and on tribal lands about the transition to all digital broadcasting. For example, the Commission

recently established a partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture's 4-H office. On April 1, 2008, the FCC, with NTIA and USDA, participated in the annual 4-H Youth leadership conference and presented two "Train the Trainer" seminars to approximately 100 youth members of 4-H chapters from the various states. FCC staff provided information which these youth representatives and their colleagues back home can use to conduct awareness sessions in their communities. In addition, each participating representative will receive a "DTV Outreach Tool Kit" containing more extensive materials for conducting their outreach sessions. We understand that the DTV outreach that will be performed by these young community leaders will assist them in meeting the community service requirements of their 4-H membership. Another important component of our partnership with USDA is the placement of DTV transition educational materials at state and county fairs throughout the country via sponsoring 4-H chapters and local extension service professionals.

We also have forged a partnership with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This collaboration has resulted in the distribution of DTV materials throughout Indian Country, utilizing all 50 of their nationwide area offices. Commission staff has attended and provided DTV materials at the National Conference of American Indians, and the Rural TeleCon Conference, with many additional events planned for this year such as participation in the National Association of Development Organizations in Alaska Conference and the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Annual Conference.

So far this year, we have presented at the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) Annual Impact Week, in Arlington, VA and have distributed DTV materials at NCAI's Executive Council Meeting, in Washington, DC. We are also planning to sponsor an Indian Telecommunications Initiative (ITI) in Salt Lake City later this year.

Finally, on January 31, 2008, we held a workshop at Commission headquarters focused on reaching rural consumers and consumers living on tribal lands. We received many useful suggestions at this workshop on how to better reach these communities. For instance, our DTV one page informational flyer is being translated into Navajo, one of the most-spoken Native American languages in the United States.

CONCLUSION

The Commission is devoting significant resources to facilitate a smooth transition. Nearly every Bureau and Office at the Commission has been involved in this effort including our field offices throughout the country.

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 next 10 months will undoubtedly be challenging. Nevertheless, it is my hope that through the combined efforts of government, industry and advocacy groups American consumers will reap the rewards that the digital transition has to offer.