

**CHAIRMAN KEVIN J. MARTIN STATEMENT REGARDING
DTV OUTREACH IN COMMUNITIES WITH HIGHEST CONCENTRATIONS
OF OVER-THE-AIR SIGNALS**

**Press Conference
Newseum (Knight Studio)**

Monday, August 18, 2008

(As Prepared for Delivery)

I'd like to thank the Newseum for so graciously hosting us this afternoon. And I'd like to give a special thanks to the NAB, CERC, CEA and NCTA for joining me today in support of our announcement.

With six months to go until the digital television transition, the industry and the Commission have been and continue to be actively reaching out to consumers to alert them of the coming transition and inform them about the steps they will need to take to be prepared for the transition. A successful digital transition will depend upon minimizing the burdens placed on consumers and maximizing their ability to benefit from it.

To that end, the FCC has identified target television markets that are most at risk and are announcing a plan for specific DTV outreach in those markets.

As part of our efforts to prepare consumers for the transition, we have identified television markets in which the largest number of viewers will have to take action to be prepared for the transition six months from now.

These markets include all those markets in which more than 100,000 households or at least 15% of the households rely solely on over-the-air signals for television.

The five FCC Commissioners and other Commission staff will fan out to these and other markets to raise awareness and educate consumers in the days leading up to the digital television transition on February 17, 2009.

Recognizing the challenges many viewers in these communities may face, Commissioners unanimously agreed to travel coast-to-coast to hold public events, meet with community leaders, broadcasters, and other stakeholders to highlight steps consumers need to take to be prepared for the transition.

At each stop, there will be a public event, such as a town hall meeting, workshop, or roundtable with an FCC Commissioner to highlight the digital transition, and be available to local press. In coordination with these visits, the FCC will work with local broadcasters and radio stations to increase the broadcasts of Radio and TV DTV PSAs.

All combined, this outreach is designed to educate consumers in these DMAs and especially those groups that are most vulnerable in the transition: Seniors, People Living in Tribal and Rural Areas, People with Disabilities, Individuals with Low-Incomes, Minorities and Non-English Speakers.

This unprecedented nationwide tour by the entire Commission is part of our commitment to prepare and educate consumers about the digital television transition.

In the days prior to each visit, FCC staffers will be on the ground providing technical and outreach assistance to local broadcasters, community leaders, and other stakeholders, to prepare for the transition to digital.

The FCC will also be coordinating with NAB to explore whether at the same time these DMAs may participate in a temporary turn off of their analog signals (“so-called soft tests”) to determine consumer readiness of the DTV transition.

In addition, for those cities not listed on the press release, the FCC today launched an FCC Speakers Bureau for any group or locality throughout the country wanting to request speakers to discuss the upcoming transition to DTV.

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 6 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.