

**STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER JONATHAN S. ADELSTEIN**  
**THE DIGITAL TELEVISION TRANSITION**  
**JUNE 3, 2009**

At last, the end of the transition – or the beginning of the end – is near.

With 9 days remaining before broadcasters permanently shut off their analog broadcasts and transition to digital, we are making our final push to minimize the number of consumers who are left in the dark on June 12. Although time is short, we will continue to work overtime to make sure this transition is a success.

On May 21, we finally held a coordinated, nationwide soft test, in preparation for the DTV transition. I long ago called for us to help inspire a nationwide soft test. It proved to be a tremendous success, reminding consumers that time is running out to prepare and encouraging coordination between local broadcasters and cable operators. Having invited viewers to call our national help line, in one day, it received 55,000 calls – nearly four times the daily average we had been receiving since May 1.

We are using this information to target our outreach efforts as we wrap up our national campaign. Of the calls we received, 51 percent needed information on the converter box coupon program, 15 percent had concerns about reception issues, and 10 percent needed converter box installation help. With the assistance of volunteers, broadcasters, grass-roots organizations, and technical assistance contractors, we are continuing to educate consumers about these issues. And we are now specifically focusing on the regions from where we received the largest volume of calls, including Chicago, Fort Worth, and New York – in addition to other DTV hotspots.

I would like to thank the broadcasters in the more than 125 communities that participated in the soft test. Broadcasters shared commitment and cooperation in helping consumers has been invaluable throughout this entire process. This has really been a cross-industry effort. I truly appreciate the leadership of public television, cable operators, consumer groups, and consumer electronics manufacturers and retailers, all of whom are here today to share their views.

In the last several months, we have made remarkable strides in preparing consumers, and we are planning a strong finish in the home stretch and during the weeks following the transition date. The remake of our DTV website, dtv.gov version 2.0 is just one example of the great work developed by FCC staff. The website, which I unveiled at the broadcasters' convention a couple months ago, has been a remarkably robust tool rich with consumer-friendly content regarding in-home installation services, DTV clinics, full-service walk-in centers, mapping and antenna information.

I want to thank Chairman Copps and the DTV Policy Group for their leadership over these last months. Chairman Copps has devoted the resources necessary to put the transition in a position to succeed. To coin a phrase, we were in trouble, and the Copps came just in time. Congress gave us additional time to get it right, and I am proud to say we have not squandered the opportunity. I also want to recognize the army of FCC volunteers who have traveled far and wide to spread the DTV word. They have been everywhere demonstrating how to hook up

converter boxes, troubleshooting technical issues, and getting folks to sign up for coupons. Just take a look at the numbers. As of April 30, nearly 16,000 DTV-related visits to the public, more than 3,500 awareness sessions, and more than 19 million pages of DTV information distributed. And our staff here in Washington, who we will hear from today, have gone above and beyond the call of duty to perform work that will long be remembered as an example of government at its best.

All this would not be possible, of course, without inter-governmental and industry coordination. More than ever, we are coordinating with the White House, NTIA and our industry partners to saturate the country with all things DTV. We are seeing the fruits of a unified federal message and a coordinated national approach. Thanks to these players, and with a strong assist from Congress by delaying the transition, I've gone from praying for a good transition to expecting a good transition.

Of course, the coming weeks will see our most furious activity yet. In effect, June 12 is the beginning of the final phase of DTV work rather than an end. Commission staff and contractors will be working around the clock and throughout the following weekend to resolve any issues that arise for broadcasters or consumers. Contract support for basic and enhanced in-home assistance and walk-in centers will continue after the transition, along with additional resources in our call center.

To everyone who has been part of this monumental effort, I want to say that we are almost there. With precious little time left, we cannot rest now. We know June 12 is really the day unprepared and under-prepared households will begin to experience the consequences of their lack of preparation. Seeing snow on TV sets across the country – that's a rare sight in June.

So we need all eligible broadcasters, particularly those in DTV hotspots, at-risk markets, to participate in the analog "nightlight" program that Congress created. Households that lose their TV reception will lose more than just entertainment programming -- they will need access to the crucial information on TV to help them make the transition. Also, access to local news and emergency information is critical, especially during this hurricane season. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is expecting 9 to 14 named storms, with 4 to 7 of those hurricanes and 1 to 3 of those to be major hurricanes. So an analog nightlight station could be the matter of life and death. I strongly encourage all broadcast stations eligible to provide nightlight service to in fact enlist to provide their viewing audiences with this important public service.

As we approach the final laps of this long race, it is safe to say that we have served the American people well. If the DTV transition were a NASCAR race, six months ago, we were lagging behind, hitting walls, crashing and burning. Since then, we got a pit stop and refueling from the Administration and Congress. We've got a new driver, rebuilt the engine, and empowered the pit crew. Today, we're zooming along and about to see the checkered flag.