

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Prepared Remarks on the Digital Television Transition
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Thank you for that presentation and to all the FCC staff who contributed to this effort for all your hard work and dedication.

I know that individuals from every bureau and office at the Commission worked hard to make the transition as smooth and seamless as possible for the millions of Americans who watch free, over-the-air television. Many of you sacrificed time at home with friends and family to help consumers prepare for the digital television age, and I thank you for your service.

I also want to applaud your collaboration with one another, with outside partners such as AmeriCorps, and with the Commerce Department and other key stakeholders across the federal government. This collaboration enabled you to draw on the strengths and resources throughout government to make a difference in peoples' lives. I look forward to building on this spirit of innovation, collaboration, and service to American consumers in future FCC initiatives.

Through your hard work and creativity, the Commission -- under the leadership of Acting Chairman Copps in collaboration with Commissioners McDowell and Adelstein -- made tremendous progress toward the FCC's goal of getting Americans prepared for this important moment in television history. Thanks to the foresight of the Congress and President Obama, you were given additional time to put together innovative programs and mobilize the resources necessary to provide essential support to the American people. Today we've heard about the million-plus calls our help center handled to walk consumers through the steps necessary to become digital-ready. We've been updated about the 100,000 successful in-home installations that were performed over the last six weeks for Americans who needed special assistance. And we've learned about the hundreds of FCC employees who volunteered to head out to all corners of the country to offer in-person support where it was most needed. All of these important elements led to the remarkable feat of cutting the number of completely unprepared television households in half since February.

Thus, our country is much better off than it would have been had we made the transition on February 17, and I applaud you for your excellent work.

But as Commissioner Copps has said on more than one occasion, our mission here is not yet accomplished. Today's panel has reported that there are consumers and individual broadcasters who still need our help. Therefore, I want to make clear that our doors and phone lines remain open for consumers who need assistance in the days and weeks ahead. We also will continue to collaborate with broadcasters to find the most effective and efficient ways to improve their service, and we look forward to hearing their ideas.

To that end, I was pleased to hear that the bureaus and offices intend to continue to be vigilant and aggressive in our DTV transition efforts. Rick Kaplan, I look forward to hearing from you and Bill Lake in the coming days about the lessons learned to date and about the status of the transition as we move forward.

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