



N A R U C
National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

R E S O L U T I O N

Resolution on Consumer Awareness of the DTV Transition

WHEREAS, Digital Television (DTV) is a new technology that will transform consumer viewing experience; *and*

WHEREAS, DTV enables broadcasters to offer television with movie-quality picture and sound. It can also offer multiple programming choices, called multicasting and interactive capabilities; *and*

WHEREAS, Converting to DTV also will free up parts of the scarce and valuable broadcast spectrum which can then be used for other important wireless communications services, such as public safety services (police and fire departments, emergency rescue), and advanced commercial wireless services; *and*

WHEREAS, TV stations serving all markets in the United States are airing digital television programming today, but all TV stations are required to cease broadcasting analog programming and only broadcast in digital beginning February 18, 2009; *and*

WHEREAS, The Commission's digital tuner rule specifies that as of March 1, 2007, all new TVs must include digital tuners and prohibits the manufacture, import, or interstate shipment of any device containing an analog tuner, unless it also contains a digital tuner; *and*

WHEREAS, Despite this prohibition on manufacture and shipment, retailers may continue to sell analog-only devices from existing inventory and as a result, at the point of sale, many consumers may not be aware that this equipment will not be able to receive over-the-air-television signals after February 17, 2009; *and*

WHEREAS, Consumers who rely on antennas (including outside antennas and "rabbit ears") to receive broadcast signals on TV sets having only analog tuners will need to obtain separate digital-to-analog set-top converter boxes to watch over-the-air TV; *and*

WHEREAS, Even consumers that subscribe to cable and satellite subscribers may need new DTV equipment to view DTV programming in digital format and consumers should inquire with their respective video provider to determine what they will need and when, to ensure service is not disrupted; *and*

WHEREAS, The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) will administer a coupon program between Jan. 1, 2008, and March 31, 2009, under which all U.S. households will be eligible to request up to two coupons, worth \$40 each, to be used toward the purchase of up to two, digital-to-analog converter boxes that will



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allow analog TV's to receive digital broadcasts. More information can be found at www.ntia.doc.gov/otiahome/dtv/dtvcoupon.html; *and*

WHEREAS, For all the aforementioned reasons the DTV Transition has the potential to negatively impact access to broadcast TV programming by millions of American consumers nationwide as of February 18, 2009; *and*

WHEREAS, The Federal Communications Commission (<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/digitaltv.html>), NTIA, broadcasters and consumer electronics manufacturers are undertaking consumer education programs to alert and educate consumers on the potential impact of the DTV Transition; *and*

WHEREAS, Both the FCC and NTIA have asked National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) and its members to assist in any way possible in assuring the public is adequately informed; *and*

WHEREAS, State utility commissions, along with other State agencies, have an interest in ensuring consumers are properly notified and well-informed about the DTV transition to minimize potential disruption of consumer access to over the air broadcast TV; *now, therefore, be it*

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, convened in its July 2007 Summer Meetings in New York, New York, recognizes the critical importance of public education concerning the looming DTV transition in the United States; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That NARUC will work with the FCC and NTIA to make available to its members educational materials created and distributed by the Federal Communications Commission, NTIA, broadcasters, consumer electronics industry, the cable industry and AARP; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That NARUC became a member of the DTV transition coalition, which is a group of public and private organizations working to assure a successful transition to digital television.

*Sponsored by the Committee on Consumer Affairs
Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors July 18, 2007*