

***Resolution Urging the FCC to Establish a Plan to Assist Broadcasters
Facing Problems of DTV Signal Strength***

WHEREAS, Congress has extended until June 12, 2009, the deadline for the end of full-power analog broadcasting, and the effective transition to digital broadcasting television (DTV) service;¹ *and*

WHEREAS, Congress has mandated the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to take such actions as are necessary to require the cessation of broadcasting by full-power stations in the analog television by June 13, 2009,² and promote the orderly transition of full-power stations from analog to DTV service;³ *and*

WHEREAS, As part of its Continuing Resolution for Fiscal Year 2009, Congress appropriated \$20 million to the FCC to help fund its DTV outreach efforts;⁴ *and*

WHEREAS, The FCC recently awarded IBM a \$12 million contract to provide call center support to assist viewers with the DTV transition, which will allow the FCC to handle up to 2 million agent-assisted calls during the week of the DTV transition, including up to 400,000 agent-assisted calls the day after such transition;⁵ *and*

WHEREAS, Congress has appropriated additional funding to the FCC or the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) for DTV transition and outreach efforts; *and*

WHEREAS, The FCC has already available a map book of all full-power DTV stations authorized by the FCC, which reflects how digital signal coverage may play out as a result of the transition;⁶ *and*

WHEREAS, DTV signal coverage differs in many ways from the analog signal footprint, and such differences in signal coverage could leave many consumers without over-the-air (OTA) signal reception; *and*

¹ See *Digital Television Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005* (February 8, 2006), § 3002 (a)(1) & DTV Delay Act, February 11, 2009.

² See *Digital Television Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005* (February 8, 2006), § 3002 (b)(1) & DTV Delay Act, February 11, 2009.

³ See 47 U.S.C. § 336 (note in reference to P.L. 107-188 of June 12, 2002, Title V, Subtitle C, § 531) & DTV Delay Act, February 11, 2009.

⁴ See FCC News (January 16, 2009).

⁵ *Supra.*

⁶ See <http://www.fcc.gov/dtv/markets/> & <http://www.fcc.gov/dtv/markets/report2.html>.

WHEREAS, There could be other instances in which the picture suddenly disappears because DTV signal falls below a certain minimum strength, *and*

WHEREAS, Some of these situations could not be fixed by antenna manipulation or reception antenna changes; *and*

WHEREAS, Assistance to consumers through the FCC's call center, along with the use of projected coverage maps, may help identify the areas where broadcast coverage of the digital footprint is deficient; *now, therefore be it*

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), convened at its 2009 Winter Committee Meetings in Washington, D.C., urges the FCC and the NTIA to continue to identify more specifically those geographical areas where the broadcasting signal has been degraded as a result of the DTV transition, and to work with broadcasters to approve any technologies, in order to improve signal coverage for the safety and benefit of consumers once the transition goes into effect; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That NARUC encourages Congress, the FCC and the NTIA to grant broadcasters the technical flexibility and tools to improve the digital signal in areas where there are communities that will be left with no reception or at risk of losing reception once the transition goes into effect, and which are currently able to receive OTA television programming; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That NARUC supports the additional funding appropriated to the FCC or the NTIA for DTV transition and outreach efforts that include a focus on those areas identified as being with no reception or at risk of losing reception once the transition goes into effect.

Sponsored by the Committee on Consumer Affairs

Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors February 18, 2009