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July 24, 2007

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
United States Senate
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye:

Television will change dramatically on February 17, 2009, when broadcasters complete the federally-mandated transition from analog to digital (DTV) broadcasting. But while the consumer benefits of DTV are undeniable, from crystal clear pictures and sound, to additional programming through multi-casting, to the capability of receiving high definition (HD) broadcasts, millions of broadcast-only households risk losing reception because they must take action to complete the mandatory upgrade.

The DTV transition is an issue the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) takes very seriously. After the February 17, 2009 hard date for analog shutoff enacted in early 2006, NAB's Television Board of Directors made the DTV transition its single highest priority, after which NAB hired a full time staff to focus exclusively on educating consumers affected by the DTV transition.

At least 19.6 million households nationwide currently rely exclusively on free, over-the-air broadcasting. As older analog television sets cannot receive digital signals, these most valued viewers of our local broadcasts are at risk of losing all access to local television programming if they do not upgrade to digital. Another 14.6 million households, which are connected to paid television services like cable or satellite, have additional unconnected sets in a bedroom or kitchen that could also lose reception. Demographics most disproportionately affected by the DTV transition are older Americans, minority populations, the economically disadvantaged and those living in rural areas.

Local television stations have spent over \$5 billion updating their equipment and infrastructure for the digital transition, and today over 92% of full power television stations are already broadcasting in digital, while at the same time, continuing their analog broadcasts. Those not yet broadcasting in digital generally face specific unresolved technical hurdles – for example, delay on the construction of Freedom Tower in New York City. But consumer awareness about the transition lags, with more than 40% of Americans surveyed completely unaware the transition is taking place.

Through its DTV consumer education team, NAB has launched a massive campaign to educate consumers everywhere about the mandatory upgrade to digital television. This letter outlines the major consumer education initiatives NAB has launched in the past six months.

Staff Resources

- 1. DTV transition staff:** NAB has hired a full-time, five person staff dedicated exclusively to DTV transition consumer education. Led by a vice president, with three directors and an administrative coordinator, NAB's DTV transition unit is engaged in a broad consumer education campaign. This effort is not unlike a political campaign, where DTV is the candidate, the transition date of February 17, 2009 is Election Day, and over-the-air viewers are our target voters. The goal of our campaign is for no consumer to lose access to free local television programming after February 17, 2009 due to a lack of information about the DTV transition.

DTV Research

- 2. Surveys and focus groups:** NAB has dedicated significant financial resources to research – from nationwide focus groups to massive surveys aimed exclusively at over-the-air viewers. With this research we have worked to find out as much as possible about our “target voters” – America's over-the-air, broadcast-only viewers, as well as households with secondary unconnected sets that receive local broadcast television signals. NAB commissioned a variety of focus groups across the country to explore consumer attitudes on DTV among specific groups of consumers, including older Americans, African Americans, and two focus groups among Hispanics in both English and Spanish. We know their demographics, how much television they watch, when they watch it, where they get their information on issues like DTV and which benefits of DTV most resonate with them. This has enabled NAB to design messages that will drive them to a desired action: taking the necessary steps to make the mandatory upgrade to digital television. NAB is also commissioning tracking surveys beginning this fall to measure any increase in consumer awareness, and allow us to focus our efforts on areas lagging in awareness.
- 3. International DTV research:** NAB staff have visited and opened dialogues with officials running respective DTV transition campaigns in the United Kingdom, Sweden, Austria and Belgium to learn how European nations – some of which have already transitioned to digital – are running their digital transition campaigns. NAB has also invited officials from those countries and others, including Austria and Singapore, to discuss DTV deployment issues with American television broadcasters. In fact, the head of the United Kingdom's DTV transition campaign is visiting with us here in Washington on July 31. Many of these international representatives attended NAB's annual convention in April, the NAB Show, to participate in a panel discussion on this topic.

Media Outreach

4. **Earned media:** NAB's DTV transition team has a full-time media relations director whose sole purpose is to make sure that the DTV transition is being covered both accurately and ubiquitously by America's reporters. We have briefed reporters on the DTV transition in New York, Chicago, San Jose and Washington, D.C., and have plans to facilitate reporter briefings in all 50 states. Our earned media team, which also employs a public relations firm, will push the most local of news hooks into stories in both inner cities and beyond metropolitan areas and out into the heartland.
5. **Web site:** NAB has provided extensive resources to our Web-based outreach, including www.DTVanswers.com – the broadcast industry's official Web site to educate consumers, journalists and opinion leaders on the DTV transition. Beyond a tutorial for consumers on what steps they must take to navigate the DTV transition, the site also offers consumer education materials to television stations, those designated speakers giving DTV presentations as part of our DTV Speakers Bureau (see below), state broadcaster associations and others partnering with NAB in our efforts.
6. **Paid media and marketing:** NAB has committed significant resources to promoting the DTV transition and its benefits in areas where public awareness of the transition lags. Our marketing efforts will dovetail with our media relations efforts, by targeting public transportation hubs and newspapers and through coordination with retailers in providing point-of-purchase consumer guides.
7. **Public service announcements (PSAs):** To supplement federal money allocated to consumer education on the DTV transition, the PSAs, which will run for free by networks and local stations, are key to driving consumer awareness on the transition. NAB is in the process of producing a PSA package for all 1,169 of our member television stations. That package will include, but is not limited to:
 - **Spots:** Four to six fully produced and edited 30second spots on transition including at least one 60second version.
 - **Teaser copy:** Copy for stations to use to tease the DTV transition in their newscasts and direct consumers to the www.DTVanswers.com Web site for more information
 - **Video package:** NAB will produce and distribute a DTV video package with B-roll footage of transmission towers, converter boxes and other useful footage to help stations report on the DTV transition.
 - **Graphic elements:** Graphics, artwork and other production elements that local stations and state broadcasters groups can use to create their own spots
 - **“Donut” spots:** One or two "donut" spots – 30-second advertisements produced on the front and back ends, with room in the middle for a sound byte from a local official or news anchor – where local stations can insert local talent into DTV public service announcements

- **DTV educational TV program:** A 25 minute educational program on the DTV transition that local commercial and public television stations can air when appropriate.
- **“Crawls”:** NAB will work with stations and networks to find agreement on the use of "crawls" – or DTV-related messages that scroll across television screens during programming – to alert consumers to the transition and drive traffic to the Web site.
- **Foreign language spots:** NAB is working with a number of groups that can take pre-produced spots and use voiceovers to make them useable on foreign language stations.

NAB will also use the PSA's to Markey digital to analog converter boxes that consumers may purchase with a \$40 government voucher, to successfully make the mandatory upgrade to digital.

Grassroots Initiatives

8. **DTV Transition Coalition:** With a large number of major stakeholders and a variety of groups affected by the DTV transition, NAB is helping coordinate the DTV Transition Coalition, a coalition of over 130 businesses, trade associations and membership organizations, dedicated to educating consumers on the DTV transition. The goal of the coalition is to ensure that no consumer loses free television reception in February 2009 due to a lack of information about the DTV transition. The coalition is recruiting organizations that have methods by which they can disseminate DTV-related information to their membership. Ensuring that all groups with an interest in the transition going smoothly is crucial, and the DTV Transition Coalition has created message documents, talking points, a PowerPoint presentation, and a comprehensive Web site (www.dtvtransition.org) to promote the transition. Eight founding organizations – NAB, the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA), the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), the Association of Public Television Stations (APTS), the Association for Maximum Service Television (MSTV), the National Cable and Telecommunications Association (NCTA), LG Electronics and the Consumer Electronics Retailers Coalition (CERC), kicked off the Coalition on February 29, with AARP joining soon after. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) officially joined the Coalition on July 6, and coalition membership now numbers over 130 businesses and organizations.
9. **Conferences:** To better educate opinion leaders and leaders of communities disproportionately impacted by the DTV transition, NAB staff will attend over 20 regional and national conferences in 2007 – including the American Library Association, NAACP, AARP, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Association of Counties, National League of Cities, National Council of La Raza, League of United Latin American Citizens and others. We are also attending the conferences of state broadcaster associations to reach out to our television stations with regional DTV seminars to ensure that the efforts and messages of NAB dovetail with those of our local broadcasters.

10. DTV Speakers Bureau: To stimulate viral marketing and one-on-one communication on the DTV transition, NAB is spearheading a national DTV Speakers Bureau to directly educate consumers on the transition. NAB will recruit speakers from local TV stations and state broadcaster associations, train them and provide them with materials for speaking engagements. This will include arming them with mock converter boxes and PowerPoint presentations, and scheduling appearances for them at locations ranging from senior centers to Kiwanis clubs to manufacturing plants to schools. We will also contact local newspapers, radio and other media to cover the events. Centralizing the effort through NAB will enable the industry to focus its efforts where consumer awareness is lagging, and provide an opportunity for local broadcasters to answer any questions consumers may have about the DTV transition.

11. DTV Road Show: By Fall 2007, NAB will launch a national DTV road show – a traveling media event that will reach more than 200 cities before February 2009. NAB spokespeople will demonstrate converter boxes in person in highly trafficked events, such as sporting events, state fairs, and at state capitol buildings and city halls. Our events will hit a large number of congressional districts, and we hope to involve you and your local district offices in our demonstrations and events.

Congressional Outreach

12. Congressional staff briefings: NAB briefed more than 100 House staffers on the DTV transition on April 30, 2007, and an additional 25 Senate staffers on July 16, 2007. We will host another round of House and Senate staff briefings in 2008, and with new members of the House and Senate in 2009 to ensure that elected officials know how the DTV transition will impact their constituents.

13. Congressional toolkit: NAB is also delivering a DTV toolkit to each member of Congress the week of July 23, 2007. The toolkit includes a PowerPoint presentation, a sample press release, a sample op-ed, talking points for DTV speeches and communication with constituents, a constituent resource guide to drive constituents to trusted sources for more information, a handbill a congressional newsletter insert in both English and Spanish, as well as Web site banner ads for congressional Web sites, and a full-size DTV awareness poster for district offices.

Broadcasters at the national, state and local levels are coordinating extensively with government, private industry, membership organizations and others to generate as much consumer awareness of the DTV transition as possible between now and February 17, 2009. Broadcast-only households continue to be the lifeblood of the industry, and the future of the industry depends upon a smooth transition to digital television. Likewise, over-the-air television is vital to keeping Americans informed on local news, community events and weather – particularly critical in times of emergency.

We encourage every member of Congress to help ensure that consumers everywhere understand the steps they must take to make the mandatory upgrade to DTV by February 2009, and all the options they have to effectively navigate the DTV transition. The broadcasting industry is committed to a smooth transition, and if you have any questions about the transition to digital broadcasting, or NAB's efforts to ensure consumers are educated, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David K. Rehr". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

David K. Rehr
President and CEO