

Section-by-Section Description of the Democratic DTV Substitute

Section 101: Short Title

“Television Takings Restoration Act of 2005”

Section 102: Findings

Section 103: Analog Spectrum Recovery: Hard Deadline

Hard Date: Sets April 7, 2009 as the deadline for when analog broadcasting must cease. This mirrors the deadline approved by the Senate Commerce Committee.

International Coordination: Requires the FCC to report to Congress every three months until the completion of negotiations on international coordination with Canada and Mexico for final DTV channels.

Digital Emergency Alert Standard: Requires the FCC to adopt a standard for emergency alerts for digital television within 180 days of enactment.

Section 104: Auction of Recovered Spectrum; Use of Proceeds

Auction of Returned Spectrum: Requires the FCC to commence auctioning the returned broadcast spectrum in January 2008.

FCC Auction Authority: Extended from September 30, 2007 to September 30, 2010.

Section 105: Television Restoration and Public Safety Communications Fund

Use of Funds: Creates a fund within the U.S. Treasury into which the auction revenue from the returned spectrum shall be placed. The following programs are authorized to receive the following funding amounts in the following order:

- A. Such sums as may be necessary for digital-to-analog converter boxes for consumers, which includes administrative expenses.
- B. \$5.8 billion for public safety interoperability.
- C. \$200 million for E-911 implementation.
- D. \$75 million to convert low power television stations and translators to digital.
- E. \$30 million for a repeater program for New York City broadcasters displaced from the World Trade Center.
- F. \$15 million to ensure effective distribution of converter boxes along the US/Mexican border.
- G. Any additional funds raised through the auction shall be deposited into a Rural, Low-Income, and Broadband Economic Development Account for broadband deployment in rural, underserved, and economically depressed areas and to promote the public use of advanced technologies and telecommunications for education and job training to ensure America's competitiveness in the 21st Century.

Section 106: TV Picture Restoration Program

Converter Box Program: Creates a program administered by NTIA to send each household a voucher which can be redeemed at participating retailers for up to two free digital-to-analog converter boxes. Vouchers must be mailed by October 1, 2008 and must be redeemed by July 31, 2009. A list of such retailers by zip code must be available to consumers by phone or Internet. To redeem the vouchers, consumers must show proof of address which retailers must verify as matching the address listed on the voucher. Vouchers must be printed in a bilingual format including both English and Spanish. The FCC will certify boxes as eligible for the program if the device has as its primary purpose converting signals from a digital to an analog format and is offered at a retail price of \$60 or less.

Section 107: Public Safety Account

Public Safety Interoperability Grants: Authorizes NTIA to make grants from the Television Restoration and Public Safety Communications Fund to implement interoperability and modernization (including equipment upgrades) for the communications needs of public safety, fire, emergency, law enforcement, and crisis management by State and local government agencies and instrumentalities and nonprofit organizations.

Section 108: Labeling and Consumer Education

Analog Television Label: Requires manufacturers to label analog-only televisions or other analog-only devices such as VCRs so that consumers are aware of the need for additional equipment to view digital broadcast signals. The simple, two-sentence label must be printed in both English and Spanish.

Industry Requirements: Requires broadcasters to air public service announcements to inform consumers of the transition to digital broadcasting. Requires cable and satellite television operators to insert a notice in billing material to inform their subscribers regarding the transition to digital.

Consumer Education: Requires the FCC to create a DTV Transition Federal Advisory Committee to lead the effort to educate the public about the deadline for termination of analog television broadcasting and the equipment options consumers have after such termination. The Committee shall be composed of representatives from commercial and noncommercial broadcasters, cable operators, satellite providers, retailers and manufacturers of consumer electronics equipment, minority groups, Hispanic Americans, disability groups, senior citizens, commercial advertisers, business and consumer groups.

Expediting Tuner Mandate: Accelerates the deadline to March 1, 2007 from July 1, 2007 by which televisions between 13 and 24 inches must contain a digital tuner.