

Before the  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
National Telecommunications and Information Administration  
Washington D.C. 20230

In the Matter of	)	
	)	Docket No.
Implementation and Administration of	)	060512129-6129-01
A Coupon Program for Digital-to-Analog	)	
Converter Boxes	)	

**Comments of Motorola, Inc.**

Motorola Inc. (“Motorola”) hereby submits these comments in response to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration’s (NTIA’s) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking<sup>1</sup> in the above-captioned proceeding that concerns the establishment of the digital-to-analog converter device coupon program authorized by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005.<sup>2</sup>

Motorola has been a consistently strong advocate of the Government’s need to help consumers prepare for the digital TV (DTV) transition. To this end, the converter set-top device program adopted by Congress will help ensure that no viewer will be without access to free over-the-air television when analog broadcast service ceases stop operation in February of 2009. The projected costs of this coupon program is vastly outweighed by the tremendous public gain that will be obtained when the DTV transition is completed as scheduled and 108 MHz of spectrum is made available for new public safety and commercial uses. Motorola applauds NTIA’s efforts to implement this unique

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<sup>1</sup> Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Docket No. 060512129-6129-01, 71 Fed. Reg. 42,067 (2006) (“*NPRM*”).

<sup>2</sup> See Title III of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, Pub. L. No. 109-171, 120 Stat. 4, 21 (Feb. 8, 2006).

legislation and to consider all of the details in the thoughtful manner described in the *NPRM*. Motorola is pleased to offer these general comments in support of the *NPRM*'s proposals.

Motorola supports the NTIA's proposal to make the program widely available to consumers and therefore supports NTIA's recommendation to allow potential applicants to request application forms through mail, via telephone and over the internet.<sup>3</sup> If, however, consumers could complete and submit applications directly on the internet, it would greatly facilitate the efficient distribution of coupons. Such electronic filing would help reduce administrative burdens by reducing the number of paper forms that must be handled.

With respect to the technical proposals, NTIA has identified the minimum operating characteristics of a converter box.<sup>4</sup> It is Motorola's understanding that Congress intended to limit the scope of the program to devices offering only the most basic set-top feature and, therefore, concludes the operational characteristics identified by NTIA are appropriate and sufficient. Motorola strongly supports the adoption of rules that allow manufacturers to self certify that the converter boxes meet the standards outlined by NTIA. In Motorola's experience, it is unlikely that an effective third party certification process could be established in a time frame necessary to test and certify all of the devices prior to the proposed commencement of the program in January of 2008. A third-party certification process would decrease the amount of time available for product development and would increase the costs of bringing the device to market. This

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<sup>3</sup> *NPRM* at 42,069.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 42,070.

is inconsistent with the overarching interest to minimize the cost to consumers of these minimum capabilities set-top devices.

Motorola does not believe that it is necessary to adopt an energy standard requirement for these converter boxes.<sup>5</sup> However, to the extent that any requirement is considered, it is important that it be instituted at the Federal level and not the State level in order to avoid inconsistent requirements across states. Even the threat of disparate State regulations would increase development and compliance costs and offer significant disincentives to manufacturer's participation in the program.

Finally, Motorola supports providing consumers with as much information as possible regarding which devices have been certified and are eligible for purchase with the coupon. Motorola recommends that the NTIA include a list of compliant devices with the coupon distribution package and, also, maintain this same list on its website. Further, the list should be cross-linked to the FCC's web site and retailers should be strongly encouraged to provide similar information on their own web sites and at the point-of-sale. Ensuring that consumers have broad access to information regarding the DTV converter program will be critical to the success of the program and NTIA's outreach efforts should be as expansive as possible.

In conclusion, the set-top device program is the integral component to a successful consumer transition to DTV broadcasting services that promises to offer so many benefits to the American public. Motorola encourages the NTIA to implement this program in a manner that neither intimidates or confuses the consumer nor increases manufacturer's regulatory costs that would need to be passed on to consumers.

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<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Steve B. Sharkey

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