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August 13, 2007

The Honorable Herb Kohl
Chairman, Special Committee on Aging
United States Senate
G31 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Kohl:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your July 23, 2007 letter regarding the digital television (DTV) transition and its impact on older Americans. While your specific concern is for the nation's seniors, other demographics most disproportionately affected by the DTV transition also include minority populations, the economically disadvantaged and those living in rural areas. Please be assured that the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) is committed to making sure no consumer is left unprepared for the transition due to a lack of information.

As you know, television will change dramatically on February 17, 2009 when broadcasters complete the federally mandated transition from analog to digital television broadcasting. But while the consumer benefits of DTV are undeniable, from crystal clear pictures and sound to additional programming through multicasting 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 NAB takes very seriously. After Congress made February 17, 2009 the hard date for analog shutoff 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. Additionally, local television stations have spent more than \$5 billion updating their equipment and infrastructure for the digital transition, and today more than 92 percent of full power television stations are already broadcasting in digital, while at the same time continuing their analog broadcasts.

Through our DTV consumer education team, NAB has launched a massive campaign to educate consumers everywhere about the mandatory upgrade to digital television. We understand that as broadcasters, we have a distinct commitment to television viewers to educate them about the switch. This letter outlines our major DTV consumer education initiative and answers questions detailed in your letter.

Question: As a steering committee member of the DTV Transition Coalition, what is the NAB's action plan for educating older Americans and the general public about the impending DTV transition and the DTV converter box coupon program?

With a goal to ensure that no consumer is left unprepared by lack of information for the February 17, 2009, federally-mandated transition from analog to digital broadcasting, NAB has launched a massive consumer education campaign on the DTV transition. Below are specific initiatives we have undertaken or plan to undertake in the next 19 months:

- Full-time staff of five dedicated exclusively to DTV consumer education
- Nationwide focus groups for English and Spanish speaking participants
- Surveys of broadcast-only homes and homes with secondary broadcast-only sets
- International DTV research
- Earned media and public relations
- Web site: www.DTVanswers.com
- Paid media and marketing
- Public service announcements (PSA) package for local TV stations
- DTV Transition Coalition
- Conferences of opinion-leaders
- Nationwide DTV Speakers Bureau
- Nationwide DTV Road Show
- Congressional staff briefings
- Congressional DTV toolkit
- Outreach to stations, state broadcaster associations
- Outreach to state and municipal governments

Attached is a letter sent to all members of Congress on August 2 which further details our consumer education efforts.

A variety of our consumer education initiatives will reach millions of older Americans – from public service announcements, to our DTV road show, to speaking engagements by broadcasters at retirement communities, nursing homes and senior centers. But we are working through specific venues to reach older Americans as well. We have dedicated significant resources to coordinating the DTV Transition Coalition – a coalition numbering more than 140 businesses, trade associations and membership organizations dedicated to educating consumers about the DTV transition. Facilitating communication between groups that share an interest in a successful transition 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. Groups involved in the Coalition are committed to distributing DTV-related information and updates to their membership.

With specific regard to seniors, NAB has worked closely with AARP, which is a member of the coalition's steering committee, to bring the message to seniors through their

regular communications with their membership. We have worked with Retirement Living TV (RLTV), a cable network and coalition member, which plans to host a series of televised DTV forums across the country. NAB participated in one such televised conference in Las Vegas earlier this year. More information is available at the RLTV Web site, www.rl.tv.

Question: How will NAB address that seniors need consistent, clear and concise messages significantly in advance of a major overhaul of a longstanding and familiar system like analog television?

NAB has commissioned focus groups with seniors, and dedicated significant resources to survey research to ensure that we are disseminating information on DTV in language that resonates with seniors. We are also working with our coalition partners, specifically AARP and RLTV, to distribute information on the DTV transition from sources that are trusted by seniors. NAB is also exhibiting at the AARP conference in Boston later this summer to reach opinion-leading seniors with information about the DTV transition.

Question: Does the NAB still intend to hire a creative ad agency to begin production of PSAs? If so, has NAB given thought to working with the National Ad Council, which as been the leading producer of PSAs since 1942 and has a proven track record in producing effective PSAs that resonate with the general public?

NAB has a long working relationship with the Ad Council, and we will review and consider various creative partners for our DTV program. NAB will produce a PSA package for stations, including not only fully-produced PSAs, but a variety of other useful materials, including:

- Video footage of converter boxes and graphic elements that can help stations better communicate the DTV transition in their newscasts;
- “Donut” spots produced on the front and back ends, where stations can insert DTV messages from local officials or news anchors;
- Spots post-produced in other languages for use on non-English stations;
- Copy to promote the DTVanswers.com Web site in news casts; and
- An educational television program on DTV that stations can air.

We will also work and consult with stations and networks on the use of “crawls” or moving messages across the television screen during programming to raise awareness of the DTV transition.

Question: How will the NAB work with entities in the Aging Network, such as the Administration on Aging, and groups devoted to the 50-plus population, such as AARP, to develop targeted PSAs that address the unique needs of older Americans?

NAB is working very closely with AARP and a large number of major stakeholders and groups affected by the DTV transition in the DTV Transition Coalition, and the coalition is recruiting organizations that have methods they can use to disseminate DTV-related information to their membership. The coalition has worked closely with AARP to

develop messaging documents, and we will continue to work with groups devoted to the 50-plus population to develop messages.

Furthermore, many of the organizations we have reached out to represent officials at the state and local level – including state legislators, county commissioners and information officers and mayors – all of which have methods by which they distribute important public information. On the federal side, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), which is not a member but works closely with the coalition, has pledged to work with federal agencies and departments to raise awareness of the transition.

NAB staff will also attend more than 20 regional and national conferences in 2007 – including those sponsored by AARP, American Library Association, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), 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. NAB staff is also attending the conferences of state broadcaster associations to reach out to television stations with regional DTV seminars to ensure that the efforts and messages of NAB dovetail with those of our local broadcasters.

Question: How will the NAB encourage local broadcasters to work with entities in the Aging Network, such as the Area Agencies on Aging and State Units on Aging, to address the unique needs of older Americans at a local level?

As discussed previously, NTIA is spearheading DTV outreach within the federal government and in order to make sure our efforts do not overlap, NAB has singularly focused outreach to state and local government organizations. Our full plan will include reaching out to a variety of state and local governments and officials, including governors, state legislators, county commissioners, information officers, mayors and state government agencies that deal with the aging population.

Further, a central goal of the DTV Transition Coalition is to start state-level coalition meetings where state broadcaster associations and local membership organizations, including AARP and other local aging groups, can discuss DTV-related issues and plan strategies to reach consumers locally.

Question: What will the NAB do to ensure that the DTV transition remains a priority for local broadcasters?

Broadcasters will be dramatically impacted by the DTV transition, as it will specifically affect broadcast-only homes – our most valued viewers. Stations are prepared to do what it takes to make sure that all consumers know about the transition and the steps they need to take to make the mandatory upgrade. No institution in America knows better how to communicate with broadcast-only households than local stations.

In fact, television stations have spent more than \$5 billion updating their equipment and infrastructure for the digital transition, and today more than 92 percent of full power television stations are already broadcasting in digital, while at the same time continuing their analog broadcasts at significant expense. It goes without saying that local stations do not wish for those expenditures – which often represent a large percentage of a station’s annual income – to be in vain.

Question: What state-by-state data does NAB currently have related to analog-only households, such as data that illustrate the age range, ethnicity and/or geographic location?

NAB’s estimates on the broadcast-only demographics population is derived from both Nielsen Media Research and the Knowledge Networks/SRI Home Technology Monitor Survey.

We have relied on Nielsen Media Research for all estimates of state-by-state data on broadcast-only viewers. As we have discussed with your staff, Nielsen considers their state-by-state data to be proprietary, and has declined our requests to make that data public.

Question: How will the NAB utilize existing data on analog-only households to target those areas with the greatest need for consumer education and outreach?

As you know, some areas of the country have much higher proportions of broadcast-only households than others. First, it is important to let elected officials in these particular areas know that their constituents are disproportionately impacted by the DTV transition. We have alerted local stations in high broadcast-only home areas, and they are prepared to do what it takes to educate their viewers, given that their success depends on making sure their viewers continue to have access to free local television programming.

Thank you again for the chance to outline our approach for the DTV transition. We look forward to working with the Committee and invite a member of your staff to participate in our DTV Coalition. 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. We would welcome the opportunity to speak further about this important topic.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David K. Rehr". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David K. Rehr
President and CEO

Enclosure