

**Testimony of Dr. Bernadette McGuire-Rivera
Associate Administrator
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce**

Before the

**Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U. S. House of Representatives**

**Hearing on
“Status of the DTV Transition: 252 Days and Counting”**

June 10, 2008

Chairman Markey, Ranking Member Stearns and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to update you on the progress of the TV Converter Box Coupon Program (Coupon Program) administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). My name is Bernadette McGuire-Rivera and I am Associate Administrator of NTIA and head of the Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications. Our Office is responsible for administering the Coupon Program as well as the other NTIA financial assistance programs established by the Deficit Reduction Act, including the Conversion and Upgrade Programs for Low Power Television and Translator Stations, the Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant Program, the NYC 9/11 Digital Transition Program, and the National Alert and Tsunami Warning Program. The Office also administers the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program. I have been a career staff member at NTIA since 1995 and am responsible for day-to-day operation of the program and supervision of the talented and dedicated NTIA staff team running the Coupon Program. In this statement, I will provide a snapshot of current coupon activity, an overview of NTIA’s consumer outreach activities, and a brief discussion of several challenges being addressed.

Coupon Program Statistics and Operations

Coupon Program operations include coupon distribution, converter box certification, retailer certification, coupon redemption and payment, and consumer education. Each area of operations has made significant progress as we reach the 6th month of operation in this 15 month program. As Members of the Subcommittee are well aware, the Coupon Program began accepting requests for coupons on January 1, 2008. Since that date, consumers in every state and territory of the United States have been ordering coupons via a toll-free number (1-888-DTV-2009), online at www.DTV2009.gov, by mail and by fax. The level of consumer participation in the Coupon Program remains high. As of June 3, 2008, NTIA has received requests from 8,511,871 households for 16,038,539 coupons, representing 70 percent of the initial base

funding of \$890 million. Coupon requests continue to average approximately 104,000 per day. Nearly half of the requesting households (49.7 percent) identify themselves as reliant exclusively on over-the-air (OTA) broadcasts to receive their television programming.

NTIA is very pleased that our contractor, IBM, has eliminated the backlog of coupon requests that originated with the significant spike of orders in the first few days of the Coupon Program. As of June 3rd, of the 16 million coupons requested, more than 14.6 million have been mailed to consumers. A coupon ordered today can be expected to be issued and mailed within 10 to 15 business days. NTIA continues to work closely with IBM to ensure that coupons are processed in a timely fashion.

As evidenced by the numbers of coupons requested to date, the Program has proven to be popular with consumers. As distributed but unredeemed coupons expire, funds otherwise obligated to those coupons will be returned to the Coupon Program. The Program currently has limited administrative funds to distribute additional numbers of coupons that might be issued from the returned funds. The Program is carefully watching its administrative funding limits so that it can distribute as many coupons as possible.

Consumers calling the phone line can speak with a live operator in English or in Spanish. The phone line can accommodate requests in 150 languages. A special assistance line for the hearing-impaired also is available – in English and Spanish – and coupon application forms are available in Braille for the visually impaired. Approximately 57.5 percent of the requests have been received through our Web site, 40.1 percent by telephone, and 2.4 percent by mail and fax. Approximately 88.4 percent of the household requests seek the maximum number of two coupons, each of which is worth \$40.

As of June 3rd, consumers have redeemed more than 2.7 million coupons toward the purchase of a coupon-eligible converter box (CECB). Coupon redemption rates will be an important factor in calculating Coupon Program spending. The first coupons were mailed on February 21, 2008, so data is available for three weeks relating to coupons that have completed the 90-day “life cycle” – i.e., the coupon has either been redeemed or has expired. As of June 3rd, 839,966 coupons have reached the end of their 90-day life cycle. Of these, 350,419, or 41.7 percent, have been redeemed. While this early-stage redemption rate is consistent with our initial estimate that about 50 percent of the coupons ordered will be redeemed, NTIA recognizes that consumers ordering coupons in the first few days of the Coupon Program may not be representative of consumers in later program stages. NTIA expects that by July 1, 2008, we will have redemption data on approximately 3.5 million coupons that will have completed their 90-day life cycle. This should provide a more robust estimate of redemption rates.

NTIA is very pleased with the high level of participation in the Coupon Program by converter box manufacturers. As of today, NTIA has certified 87 converter boxes, each designed for the exclusive statutory purpose of enabling a consumer to view digital broadcast signals on an analog television.

NTIA is continuing to certify boxes and is expediting review of those that have the capability to pass-through the analog signals that will continue to be transmitted by many low-power and television translator stations after February 17, 2009. As of June 3, 2008, NTIA has certified 21 boxes with this “analog pass-through” capability. Manufacturers who have certified analog pass-through boxes include RCA, Craig, Philco, Magnavox, Memorex, Zenith, and others.

The response from America’s retailers has likewise been outstanding. As of June 3, 2008, there are 1819 participating retailers in the Program, including seven of the largest consumer electronics retailers—Best Buy, Circuit City, Kmart, Radio Shack, Sears, Target and Wal-Mart—as well as hundreds of regional chains and smaller retailers. These retailers represent 19,440 participating outlets nationwide, including locations in all 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Additionally, consumers can choose from among 19 online retailers and 7 phone retailers. In short, consumers – even those in areas where the closest consumer electronics retailer is fifty or one hundred miles away – have ready access to coupon-eligible converter boxes. A list of all participating retail outlets, searchable by state and 5-digit zip code, can be found on www.DTV2009.gov under “Locate a Retailer Near You.”

At the request of many of these retailers, NTIA is making coupon request data available on a per state basis, as well as based on 3- and 5-digit zip code. NTIA and IBM have made employee training materials available to all participating retailers so that they will be ready to answer consumers’ questions about certified boxes and the use of the coupon for payment. Participating stores have completed certification in the Coupon Program have certified that their employees are trained, they have converter box inventory in their stores, and their systems are prepared to redeem coupons.

Wilmington, North Carolina Test Pilot Program

NTIA is participating actively with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the September 8, 2008, “test pilot” switch to digital in the Designated Market Area (DMA) of Wilmington, North Carolina. NTIA has taken steps to monitor Coupon Program participation in the Wilmington area and create materials appropriate for the test market. NTIA participated in the May 27, 2008, FCC Town Hall Meeting to discuss the test pilot with local leaders and citizens. In addition, special NTIA brochures and applications have been created showing September 8, 2008, as the transition date, and NTIA’s www.DTV2009.gov has a page devoted to the Wilmington test, including frequently asked questions and collateral materials. Because May 31, 2008, marked “100 Days Out” for Wilmington, NTIA will be testing more urgent messages, similar to what we would unveil for the nation 100 days prior to February 17, 2009. NTIA also is looking closely at the needs of nursing home residents and consumers receiving mail at a Post Office Box to assess their needs in this limited market and learn more about how to address these situations nationally. NTIA is working closely with the DTV Transition Coalition and other partners to coordinate and complement efforts.

As of June 3, 2008, NTIA has received requests for 28,193 coupons from 15,234 households in the Wilmington DMA. As of June 3rd, more than 21,866 coupons have been mailed to consumers in the Wilmington DMA and, of those, more than 3,867 have been redeemed for a converter box. Now that the coupon distribution backlog has been eliminated, Wilmington residents should expect coupons to be mailed within 10 to 15 days from the date of request.

Consumers living in the Wilmington area may purchase coupon-eligible converter boxes at 22 participating retail outlets, including Best Buy, Circuit City, Direct Depot, Kmart, RadioShack, Sears, Target and Wal-Mart, as well as through any of the participating online and phone retailers. Although the Coupon Program is aware that some participating retailer stores have occasionally run out of CECBs for a short time, we are not aware of any long-term national or regional shortages of CECBs, including in the Wilmington area. Viewers in Wilmington may not need converters with analog pass through since the DMA's low-power stations plan to begin digital transmissions on that day.

NTIA commends the broadcasters of Wilmington for stepping up to make this test pilot project possible. We also applaud the *citizens* of Wilmington – after all, while this may be a test, for the people of Wilmington, this is the *real thing*. NTIA stands ready to assist the FCC, our partners in Wilmington, and the people of Wilmington to ensure they are prepared for September 8th, and has been in touch with Wilmington area retailers to help ensure that they are prepared for a likely spike in consumer demand for converter boxes beginning this summer.

DTV Education Efforts

Consumer Education About the Coupon Program and the DTV Transition Is A Top Priority

Educating consumers about the Coupon Program is one of NTIA's – and the Commerce Department's – top-most priorities, and one in which both Commerce Secretary Gutierrez and NTIA Acting Assistant Secretary Baker are regularly and actively engaged. In particular, a key message we are delivering to consumers is that while the analog cut-off date will occur on February 17th, 2009, the time for consumers to experience the benefits of DTV is *now*. The time to order a coupon and purchase a converter box is *now*. This message has been delivered repeatedly by Secretary Gutierrez and Acting Assistant Secretary Baker, most recently at the conventions of the National Association of Broadcasters and the National Cable and Telecommunications Association. Additionally, in April, Secretary Gutierrez discussed the Coupon Program in an address to Radio Shack's annual vendor summit at its headquarters in Ft. Worth, Texas, and issued a statement urging consumers not to wait to request and redeem their coupons, saying "I encourage all Americans who have ordered a coupon to purchase your eligible converter box within the 90-day required timeframe."

NTIA's consumer education campaign is focused on educating U.S. residents who receive OTA broadcasts on analog television sets about the digital transition and the Coupon Program. NTIA places special emphasis on vulnerable audiences such as over-the-air senior, minority, disabled, low-income and rural households who are at a greater risk of losing all television service as a result of the digital transition.

NTIA is working with print, broadcast and online media, and engaging partners to disseminate information nationally, regionally and locally. To date, the Program has engaged 272 partners, many with ties to seniors, rural residents, lower-income, minorities, and disabled Americans. We are working with large institutions to get the word out about the Coupon Program, such as AARP, the NAACP, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Catholic Charities USA, Community Action Partnership, Goodwill Industries, National Congress of American Indians, and the National Grange. NTIA is also working with local and regional community organizations, such as the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Utah Eldercare Planning Council and JobStarts, Inc. in California, to reach vulnerable populations most likely to be affected by the transition.

Consistent with its focus on getting consumers activated *today*, NTIA kicked off the month of April by driving consumers to "Experience the Benefits" of digital television. During the first two weeks of April alone, NTIA worked with local partners to support ten events in communities across the country. These events highlight the commitment and creativity trusted local community organizations are demonstrating in reaching the people they serve. Community, Services, Employment, Training (CSET), a Community Action Agency, hosted an information session for three of the organization's English as a Second Language classes in Visalia, California; Philadelphia Responds/Mayor's Commission on Technology hosted its inaugural train-the-trainers session on the DTV transition and Coupon Program; and the Noel Wien Public Library and AlaskaOne TV hosted a "Digital Television: Experience the Benefits" DTV transition awareness event open to the Fairbanks, Alaska, residents. Other events were held in Fort Worth, Texas; Fayetteville, North Carolina; Leesville, Louisiana; Sioux City, Iowa; Norfolk, Virginia; Boise, Idaho; and Conway, South Carolina.

NTIA also is working with no fewer than 17 federal departments and agencies with direct communications to vulnerable populations, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Just to highlight several ways in which we've partnered with other Federal agencies:

- NTIA provided 54,000 mail stuffers to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, which will be sent to families eligible for and requesting information about the Food Stamp Program.
- NTIA partners with USDA's Rural Development (RD) agency to host a Web-based training to educate RD employees across the county about the DTV transition and Coupon Program; More than 100 individuals participated in the training webinar.

- The Environmental Protection Agency's Aging Initiative included an article about the transition and the Coupon Program in their April 2008 newsletter that reaches approximately 4,000 individuals.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) - Administration for Children and Families - Office of Community Services distributed information about the transition and Coupon Program to 900 local social service agencies across the country.
- NTIA is in communication with the United States Postal Service to assess the feasibility of putting Coupon Program applications in all 32,000 post offices across the nation.

A complete list of NTIA's partners is included as an attachment to this statement.

NTIA's partners are responding with thoughtful and creative ways to spread the word to their constituencies about the transition and the Coupon Program. We thank them for their tireless efforts. A good example is the 4-H arm of the USDA's Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES). Collegiate 4-H, the college student 4-H organization, selected the DTV transition as its 2008 National Service Project topic. There are Collegiate 4-H clubs on at least 95 college campuses in 42 states. During the year, each chapter must carry out at least one DTV project based on lesson-plan material developed by NTIA.

NTIA is in dialogue with a coalition of aging organizations that includes the Administration on Aging, AARP, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, and others, who are exploring ways to assist our most vulnerable seniors with the Coupon Program. We conducted a senior focused train-the-trainer Webinar on February 26, 2008. Representatives from 12 senior organizations totaling nearly 200 individuals from 25 states participated—but more importantly the information gained has led to on-the-ground outreach. For example, the West Alabama Area Agency on Aging has already trained 28 Senior Center directors and coordinators, 7 case managers and 20 staff from local Area Agencies on Aging across the state so they can talk with older Americans about the Coupon Program; and the Uniontown, Ohio Area Agency on Aging is distributing 4,000 information sheets and 1,500 coupon applications to local clients through recently trained case managers.

NTIA is sensitive to concerns raised by these groups regarding the need by many seniors for technical assistance with their converter box. NTIA has worked with the Consumer Electronics Association to produce a generic "Quick Start Guide" and installation video, both of which are available at www.DigitalTips.org and linked to by DTV2009.gov. Additionally, NTIA worked with reporters from the *Washington Post* to tape an instructional video on converter box installation, which can be found on the Washingtonpost.com website.

Similarly, we are working with disabilities groups to raise awareness of the Coupon Program. For example, NTIA is participating in the Hearing Loss Association of America's (HLAA) convention in Reno, Nevada, next month, as well as the American Council of the Blind's annual event over the Fourth of July weekend in Louisville, Kentucky. At the HLAA event, we are partnering with the Consumer Electronics Association to demonstrate the captioning features of converter boxes. We are proud of the fact that the Coupon Program is 100 percent accessible for people with disabilities. For example, our TTY number is available in English as well as Spanish for the hearing impaired. In addition to making the Coupon Program application available in Braille, the actual coupon card is embossed with a unique 16-digit number sequence to assist visually impaired individuals distinguish it from a credit card mail offer.

NTIA is keenly aware of the need to reach out to communities in which the primary language may not be English. Official Coupon Program information is being made available in numerous languages – Spanish, French, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog and Russian. As a result of feedback from our partners, we are also in the process of translating some of our materials, including the coupon application, into Korean, Cambodian, Traditional Chinese, Hmong and Laotian. On May 6th, NTIA participated in a congressional “Tri-Caucus” briefing sponsored by Representative Solis, which focused on the needs of Black, Latino and Asian Pacific Americans.

Also, last month, NTIA participated in an event in San Francisco as part of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in which KTSF, an Asian-language commercial broadcaster in the Bay Area, and the California Public Utilities Commission brought together around 100 leaders in the Asian American community to raise Coupon Program awareness, especially among primary Chinese and Korean speakers. The event not only ignited outreach efforts to reach the Asian community, it also immediately resulted in coverage of the issue in publications that directly reach this community including Korea Daily, Philippine News and World Journal. Additionally, the toll-free National Multilingual Helpline of the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging in Seattle, Washington is assisting Asian Pacific elders with information about the upcoming transition in at least four Asian languages.

Secretary Gutierrez has taken a special interest in reaching out to Latino populations. For example, in December 2007, he was featured in the first of a series of public service programs entitled, “TV Digital...¿Que Tal?” which aired throughout the United States and Puerto Rico on the Spanish-language Univision Television Network. More recently, he has also conducted interviews with outlets that specifically reach Hispanic populations including La Voz, CNN en Espanol Radio, Univision, La Opinion, Washington Hispanic and El Tiempo Latino. HHS Assistant Secretary of Aging, Josefina G. Carbonell, is reaching out through targeted press across the country to inform Hispanic elders and their families of the DTV transition.

Consumer Awareness about the DTV Transition and the Coupon Program Is Growing

It is clear that these consumer education efforts are succeeding. The coupon application numbers speak for themselves. Multiple consumer surveys also bear this out: a survey released by the Association of Public Television Stations in March 2008 showed a 50 percent jump in consumer awareness about the DTV transition between November 2007 (51 percent) and March 2008 (76 percent). Similarly, a Consumer Electronics Association survey released in January 2008 revealed 74 percent consumer awareness about the transition. In late May, Nielsen Media Research released a new study analyzing the “digital readiness” of U.S. households. NTIA will be reviewing this data carefully to see what mid-course corrections in our outreach may be needed to reach key markets with large percentages of what Nielsen identifies as “completely unready” households—that is, those households that would lose their television service completely after February 17, 2009, unless they take some action.

Working with its communications contractor, Ketchum, NTIA continues to respond to media requests and inquiries concerning the Coupon Program. As such, the Program has garnered significant coverage of the Program in print publications, on the radio and on television. NTIA has tracked this coverage and the resulting media impressions regarding the Coupon Program since September 10, 2007. The following chart shows the cumulative number of print circulation, online unique visits and broadcast impressions through May 31, 2008:

Period	Print Circulation	Online Unique Visits	Broadcast Impressions
As of January 31, 2008	55,287,903	790,968,896	61,930,084
As of February 29, 2008	86,704,470	1,461,800,861	77,976,320
As of March 31, 2008	101,948,865	1,831,462,304	97,279,716
As of April 30, 2008	133,133,069	2,475,646,251	133,325,921
As of May 31, 2008	149,212,817	2,738,704,788	176,597,605

The print and broadcast media coverage of the Coupon Program alone has reached almost every DMA in the United States, most of them multiple times. Importantly, 40 of the 45 DMAs with the greatest concentration of OTA households and at-risk populations have seen more than ten media stories per market on the DTV transition and Coupon Program appearing in local print or broadcast media outlets. It is important to underscore that these impressions are in addition to the “action spots” and public service announcements being run by the nation’s local broadcasters and cable operators. According to the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), its digital transition campaign will lead to every household seeing, hearing, or otherwise being exposed to DTV transition-related messages approximately 642 times before the transition date.

Now that NTIA has data on Coupon Program requests by DMA, the Agency is able to fine tune its consumer education, reaching out to media in markets where Program participation is unexpectedly low to raise awareness. For example, NTIA has recently found success in Anchorage, Alaska, where we were on the Alaska Public Radio network live; and in Honolulu, Hawaii, where we conducted a radio interview and placed an Op-Ed from Secretary Gutierrez in The Hawaii Reporter.

One of the keys to the success of the Coupon Program is its voluntary nature, which has fostered strong public-private partnerships. NTIA is very impressed by the willingness of the stakeholder industry groups to work together to make the transition a success. The industries most directly affected by the transition – especially broadcasters and cable operators – have initiated significant educational efforts with real financial commitments to ensure that no household is caught unprepared on February 18, 2009. Both broadcasters and cable operators continue to include information about the Coupon Program in their on-air announcements, which we believe to be a significant factor in the continued high number of coupon requests. The DTV Coalition is also making great strides in educating the American public about their options for making the transition. We applaud those efforts.

The NTIA Toolkit

NTIA has worked with IBM and Ketchum to develop a comprehensive toolkit of information to help organizations that are playing a critical role in educating their members, constituents and customers about the Coupon Program. The Toolkit consists of a set of materials, including fact sheets, a poster, a mailer, sample presentations and other materials that many organizations are now using to help educate their members. The Toolkit also contains specific tools and strategies that can be used to reach the media to effectively deliver the Coupon Program message, and ideas and resources for informing consumers through community and in-store events or other activities.

The Toolkit also is an extremely useful resource for Members of Congress seeking to communicate to their constituents about the Coupon Program. Indeed, NTIA continues to work closely with many congressional offices, as well as the Committees of jurisdiction and the Congressional DTV Caucus, to brief staff and educate constituents about the Coupon Program, as well as to help prepare materials for local town hall meetings, franked mailings, and other outreach, including to senior centers and other critical-to-reach groups. NTIA staff has helped to coordinate, and participated in, many Members' town hall meetings and similar local education events, as well as several "Tele-Town Hall Meetings." For example, on May 29, 2008, NTIA participated in a town hall meeting put on by Senator Ted Stevens in Anchorage, Alaska, to get the word out in a community with a very large percentage of over-the-air households. Multiple congressional events are planned in the coming months.

In addition to the collection of English and Spanish materials NTIA has available to partners, we are providing additional tools as needed that may assist in our partners' efforts. Specifically, we developed a screen saver for distribution to libraries across the country so computers not in use could display information about the transition; we provided the National Grange with step-by-step instructions on setting up information and application completion stations at state and county fairs; and provided the Radio & TV News Directors Association a list of 12 items related to the transition and Coupon Program their members are using to discuss in radio and television broadcasts over the next 12 months.

Just recently, NTIA assisted Chairmen Markey and Dingell in setting up a TV Converter Box Program demonstration table in the Rayburn cafeteria, providing congressional staff with information about the Coupon Program and the Transition in a highly trafficked area of the House complex. NTIA also is working with Energy and Commerce Committee leadership, the DTV Caucus, the FCC and other groups to conduct a "DTV Education Day" in July. At this event, Members and staff will have an opportunity to hear presentations about the transition and the Coupon Program, ask questions of government and industry representatives, and get information about how best to educate constituents about the DTV transition and what resources are available to do so.

As mentioned earlier, NTIA is working with all of our partners involved in the Wilmington, North Carolina, test market to ensure that consumers there are fully prepared to take the early leap to all-digital broadcasts in September. We are focusing efforts, as well, on senior living facilities and nursing homes, in anticipation of proposed changes to our rules, which I will discuss momentarily, that would make residents of these facilities eligible to receive coupons.

Challenges

As with any new program as large, complex and time bound as the Coupon Program, challenges continually arise. NTIA currently faces several such challenges and is working diligently to address them quickly and in a manner that serves the best interests of the American people.

Eligibility of Nursing Home Residents and Persons Utilizing a P.O. Box

One such challenge involves the eligibility of residents of nursing homes and other senior care facilities, as well as persons receiving mail at a Post Office Box. Under its existing rules, residents of nursing homes and other senior care facilities are not eligible to receive coupons if they do not have a separate U.S. Postal Service mailing address. On April 24, 2008, NTIA released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in which the agency proposed to waive the "eligible household" and application requirements for individuals residing in nursing homes or other senior-care facilities, subject to certain alternative application requirements.

The Agency also proposed to permit an otherwise eligible household that utilizes a Post Office Box for mail receipt to apply for and receive coupons subject to providing satisfactory proof of physical residence, as specified in the proposed rule.

Yesterday (June 9, 2008) was the deadline for public comments on the NPRM. NTIA appreciates the concern expressed by several members of the Committee – including Chairman Markey and Reps. Schakowsky, Butterfield and Waxman – that NTIA move quickly on this rulemaking. We are now reviewing the comments we have received and hope to issue a final rule as expeditiously as possible.

With regard to the Coupon Program's funding needs, on April 25, 2008, as the members of the Subcommittee are aware, NTIA submitted a statement, as required under Section 3005(c)(3) of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, certifying our anticipation that the initial funds of \$990 million will be insufficient to fulfill the requests for coupons for eligible households, specifically with respect to administrative resources. If proposed changes in the NPRM are adopted, NTIA anticipates that the administrative costs of the Coupon Program will increase, and that access to the contingent funds will be necessary to fully implement those changes.

Coupon Delivery Delays

Although the backlog of coupons has been eliminated, NTIA believes that maintaining timely distribution of coupons will remain a challenge. This challenge may become particularly acute if coupon demand rises in the weeks immediately preceding the February 17, 2009 cutoff date. Delivery time is affected by two factors: IBM's coupon creation and activation capacity and the time required for postal delivery. Currently, IBM has increased its production capability beyond what it had originally envisioned. NTIA continues to work closely with our contractor to ensure that coupon requests will be handled timely especially in the crucial last 100 days of the program.

As members of the Subcommittee are aware, the Program is required by statute to deliver coupons using the U.S. Postal Service. To keep administrative costs down, coupons are mailed by Standard Class, as opposed to the more costly First Class service. Given the statutory 90-day expiration date of each coupon and the resulting importance of timely delivery, NTIA is reaching out to the U.S. Postal Service to request that coupon mailings be given priority attention.

Meeting the Needs of Viewers of Class A, Low Power and TV Translator Stations

NTIA, like Congress, is focused on meeting the needs of viewers of Class A, low-power television and television translator stations. As this Committee is well aware, these stations are not subject to the February 17, 2009, analog broadcasting cutoff deadline, and viewers of these stations who wish to continue receiving these analog broadcasts as well as the new digital signals after that date may choose to get a converter box that includes an analog signal pass-through feature, or may choose to use a two-way splitter. As discussed earlier, NTIA currently has certified 21 boxes with an analog pass-

through capability. NTIA highlights boxes with the analog pass-through feature on the Program's website and in consumer mailings with the coupons. In addition, NTIA has sent helpful information to operators of Class A, low-power television and television translator stations so that they can inform their viewers of the options they have regarding the digital transition. Congress set aside a total of \$75 million in auction proceeds to fund two grant programs that will assist eligible Class A, low-power television, and television translator stations to make the transition as quickly and smoothly as possible. The Low-Power Television and Translator Digital-to-Analog Conversion Program will provide \$1,000 to eligible low-power stations that must purchase a digital-to-analog conversion device to convert the incoming digital signal of a full-power television station to analog for transmission on the low-power station's analog channel. To date, 452 grants have been awarded under this program. Applications will be accepted until February 17, 2009.

Of course, stations that operate at less than full power will eventually convert to digital broadcasts. The Low-Power Television and Television Translator Upgrade Program established by Congress directs NTIA to assist this effort through a program that provides \$65 million for necessary equipment upgrades to stations in eligible rural communities. To implement this program in a timely manner, a technical correction to the program authorization is required to permit the agency to begin making funds available during fiscal year 2009. On April 24, 2008, the Senate Commerce Committee approved a bill introduced by Senator Snowe (S. 2607) that would make the necessary technical correction to the Program. NTIA urges the House to take favorable action on this legislation as soon as possible.

NTIA will continue to work with the FCC, industry and the broadcast community to assist low-power television stations and their viewers during the transition to digital broadcasting. To that end, on May 16 and 17, 2008, NTIA staff from the Low Power Television and Translator Station Conversion and Upgrade Programs attended the National Translator Association Meeting in Spokane, Washington. Staff discussed these broadcasters' transition needs related to NTIA programs, including public information for their viewers and how these stations can obtain financial assistance to make the transition to digital.

Waste, Fraud and Abuse

NTIA remains vigilant in monitoring for waste, fraud and abuse across all components of the project. The agency also meets regularly with the Inspector General, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and Department of Commerce auditors to monitor all aspects of the program from coupon request to retailer payment.

To date no egregious instances of waste, fraud and abuse have been discovered. However, several retailers have been decertified from the program for a variety of violations of program rules. In these cases, NTIA has also taken swift action to the extent possible to ensure that retailers remedy any adverse effects suffered by consumers. While the number of decertified retailers is only a very small percentage of the 1,819 actively

participating retailers, these instances remind us of the importance of guarding against WFA. NTIA is also working closely with the Federal Trade Commission and the FCC to develop a “Tip Sheet” that will provide consumers with information on how to identify and avoid possible coupon abuses.

We are pleased with the progress that has been made in these first six months of the Coupon Program and we are confident our continued, combined and cooperative efforts with our partners in private industry and the public sector will only add to this success to the benefit of all Americans, as well as other stakeholders such as public safety entities.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify before you today. I will be happy to answer your questions.

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

Organizations Engaged in DTV Coupon Program Education and Outreach	Demographic	National or Regional/Local	State
(updated 5/30/08)			
Philadelphia Responds (partnership between City of Philadelphia Mayor's Commission on Technology (MCOT), WHYH and the Free Library of Philadelphia)	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Pennsylvania
AARP	Senior	N	
Ada County Public Information Department		R/L	Idaho
AgeAdvantAge AAA in Wisconsin	Senior	R/L	Wisconsin
Alamo Area Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Texas
Alaska Department of Health and Social Services		R/L	Alaska
Alaska Special Education Office	Disabled	R/L	Alaska
Alaskan Federation of Natives	Minority	R/L	Alaska
Alliance of Information & Referral Systems		N	
American Association of People with Disabilities	Disabled	N	
American Council of the Blind	Disabled	N	
American Foundation for the Blind	Disabled	N	
American Library Association		N	
Appalachian Regional Commission	Rural	R/L	West Virginia, Alabama, New York, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Tennessee, South Carolina
Area 12 Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	California
Area 9 In-Home and Community Services	Senior	R/L	Indiana
Area Agency on Aging 10B, Inc.	Senior	R/L	Ohio
Area Agency on Aging 1-B	Senior	R/L	Michigan
Area Agency on Aging of Tarrant County	Senior	R/L	Texas
Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan	Senior	R/L	Michigan
Area on Aging-Region IX	Senior	R/L	California
Asian Media Access	Minority	N	Minnesota
Asociacion Nacional Pro Personas Mayores (National Association for Hispanic Elderly)	Minority, Senior	N	
Association of Public TV Stations (APTS)		N	
Association on American Indian Affairs	Minority	N	
Austin Hispanic Chamber	Minority	R/L	Texas
Azteca America San Diego	Minority	R/L	California
Boise Public Library		R/L	Idaho
Burlington County Office on Aging	Senior	R/L	New Jersey
Cable and Telecommunications Marketing Association (CTAM)		N	
Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau		N	
Catholic Charities	Economically Disadvantaged	N	
Catholic Communications of the Diocese of Springfield (Massachusetts)		R/L	Massachusetts
Central Plains Area Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Kansas
Central Vermont Council on Aging	Senior	R/L	Vermont
City of El Paso's Department of Community and Human Development, Neighborhood Services Division	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Texas

Organizations Engaged in DTV Coupon Program Education and Outreach	Demographic	National or Regional/Local	State
City of Fort Collins Recreation	Senior	R/L	Colorado
City of Houston Housing and Community Development Department	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Texas
City of Las Cruces		R/L	New Mexico
Clinton County Office for the Aging	Senior	R/L	New York
Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology	Economically Disadvantaged	N	
Community Action Agency of Siouxland	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Iowa
Community Action Partnership	Economically Disadvantaged	N	
Consumer Action		N	
Consumer Electronics Association		N	
Consumer Union		N	
Coordinated Home Health of Las Cruces	Senior	R/L	New Mexico
Corporation for National and Community Service	Senior	N	
CSBG/HHS/Division of Family Assistance - Concord, NH		R/L	New Hampshire
CSET		R/L	California
Cumberland Community Action, Inc.	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	North Carolina
D&K Global			
Dallas ACORN Housing Corp	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Texas
Dallas Area Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Texas
Davie County Senior Services	Senior	R/L	North Carolina
D.C. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs		R/L	Washington DC
Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging	Senior	R/L	Pennsylvania
Department of Information Technology - Seattle, WA	Minority	R/L	Washington
DTV Transition Coalition		N	
E-copernicus			
Educational Broadcasting Corporation (EBC)		R/L	New York
Eight/KAET		R/L	Arizona
El-Ada Community Action Partnership	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Idaho
Esperanza	Minority	N	
Family Caregiver Support Center, Pikes Peak Area Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Colorado
Family, Career and Community Leaders of America		N	
Fairbanks Native Association	Minority	R/L	Alaska
Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Libraries		R/L	Alaska
Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Minority	R/L	Texas
Friendship Trays	Senior	R/L	North Carolina
General Federation of Women's Clubs		N	
Generations - A Partner with Vincennes University	Senior	R/L	Indiana
Georgia Public Broadcasting (Georgia Public Telecommunications Commission)		R/L	Georgia
Golden Slipper Senior Center	Senior	R/L	Pennsylvania
Goodwill Industries International, Inc	Economically Disadvantaged	N	
Greater Cincinnati Television Educational Foundation (CET)		R/L	Ohio
Greater Dallas Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	Minority	R/L	Texas
Greater Dayton Public Television (ThinkTV)		R/L	Ohio
Greater Metro Telecom Consortium, Denver, CO		R/L	Colorado
Greater Nashville Regional Council Area Agency on Aging and Disability	Senior	R/L	Tennessee
Harleysville Senior Center	Senior	R/L	Pennsylvania
Harris County Area Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Texas
Hattie Holmes Wellness Center	Senior	R/L	Washington, D.C.
Henderson County Public Library		R/L	Kentucky

Organizations Engaged in DTV Coupon Program Education and Outreach	Demographic	National or Regional/Local	State
Hispanic Communications Network	Minority	N	
Houston ACORN Housing Corp	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Texas
Houston Galveston Area Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Texas
Institute of Rural Journalism and Community Issues	Rural	N	
JobStart, Inc.	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	California
KBTC Public Television		R/L	Washington
KCBD		R/L	Texas
KEDT-TV		R/L	Texas
Kentucky Educational Television (KET)		R/L	Kentucky
KENW-TV		R/L	New Mexico
KMBH		R/L	Texas
KMOS-TV		R/L	Missouri
KNME		R/L	New Mexico
Koahnic Broadcast Corporation	Minority	R/L	Alaska
KQED		R/L	California
KSMQ		R/L	Minnesota
KSPS-TV		R/L	Washington, Idaho, Mont
KTSF-TV	Minority	R/L	California
KVIE		R/L	California
KVUE		R/L	Texas
KWBU-TV		R/L	Texas
LA 18 TV	Minority	R/L	California
La Voz Del Anciano (LVDA)	Minority	R/L	Texas
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights	Minority	N	
LifeTime Resources, Inc.	Senior	R/L	Indiana
Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB)		R/L	Louisiana
Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council Area Agency on Aging (LRGVDC-AAA)	Senior	R/L	Texas
Lt. Governor's Office - Chicago, IL		R/L	Illinois
Mayor's Office of Hawaii		R/L	Hawaii
MCCSA Senior Citizen Nutrition Program	Senior	R/L	Michigan
Meals on Wheels Association of America	Senior	N	
Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island	Senior	R/L	Rhode Island
Meals On Wheels of Stark & Wayne Counties	Senior	R/L	Ohio
Meals on Wheels, Inc. of Tarrant County	Senior	R/L	Texas
Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Minnesota
Michigan Medicare and Medicaid Assistance Program	Senior	R/L	Michigan
Middleton Senior Center	Senior	R/L	Wisconsin
Minority Media and Telecommunications Council	Minority	N	
Mobile Meals of Toledo	Senior	R/L	Ohio
Monmouth County Office on Aging	Senior	R/L	New Jersey
Monona Senior Center	Senior	R/L	Wisconsin
Montgomery County Public Library		R/L	
NAACP	Minority	N	
National Asian Pacific Center on Aging	Minority	N	
National Association for Area Agencies on Aging (N4A)	Seniors	N	
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)	Minority	N	
National Association of Black Journalists	Minority	N	
National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCJ)	Minority	N	
National Association of Broadcasters		N	
National Association of Counties	Rural	N	
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials	Minority	N	
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)	Seniors	N	
National Association of Regional Councils		N	
National Association of Regulatory Utility Commission		N	
National Association of Rural Health Clinics	Rural	N	
National Association of State Units on Aging (NASUA)	Seniors	N	
National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisers	Rural	N	
National Cable & Telecommunications Association		N	

Organizations Engaged in DTV Coupon Program Education and Outreach	Demographic	National or Regional/Local	State
National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc.	Minority	N	
National Conference of State Legislatures		N	
National Council on Aging	Seniors	N	
National Energy Assistance Director's Association	Economically Disadvantaged	N	
National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NBPA)	Minority	N	
National Hispanic Council On Aging	Minority	N	
National Hispanic Media Coalition	Minority	N	
National Indian Council On Aging, Inc.	Minority	N	
National League of Cities		N	
National Religious Broadcasters		N	
National Urban League	Minority	N	
Native American Journalists Association	Minority	N	
Native American Public Telecommunications	Minority	N	
Native Public Media	Minority	N	
NBC Weather Plus		N	
New Mexico Child Support Enforcement Services		R/L	New Mexico
New Mexico Higher Education Department		R/L	New Mexico
New Mexico State Library Association		R/L	New Mexico
New Tang Dynasty Television	Minority	N	
Next Generation Services L.L.C.			
Nonprofit Enterprise Center of El Paso	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Texas
North Attleboro, MA Library		R/L	Massachusetts
North Carolina Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	North Carolina
North Shore Elder Services	Senior	R/L	Massachusetts
Northern California Public Broadcasting (NCPB)		R/L	California
Northwest Settlement House	Senior	R/L	Washington, D.C.
Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments, Agency on Aging, Winston Salem, NC	Senior	R/L	North Carolina
OASIS Portland	Senior	R/L	Oregon
OneStar Foundation	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Texas
Onondaga County Department of Aging & Youth	Senior	R/L	New York
Orange County Deaf Equal Access Foundation (OC DEAF)	Disabled	R/L	California
Oregon Public Television		R/L	Oregon
Passaic County Senior Services	Senior	R/L	New Jersey
PBS		N	
Petaluma People Services Center		R/L	California
Radio-Television News Directors Association		N	
RAINBOW PUSH Public Policy Institute	Minority	N	
Recording Artists, Actors & Athletes Against Drunk Driving (RADD)		N	
Rhode Island PBS		R/L	Rhode Island
Rio Grande Area Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Texas
Rochester, MN Senior Center	Senior	R/L	Minnesota
Rocky Mountain PBS		R/L	Colorado
Rotary Club of South Bend Indiana		R/L	Indiana
Rural Coalition/Coalicion Rural (DC)	Rural	N	
Salvation Army	Economically Disadvantaged	N	
SeniorsFirst (TX)	Senior	R/L	Texas
Senior Centers of Spartanburg County, INC.	Senior	R/L	South Carolina
Senior Citizens Services of Greater Tarrant County	Senior	R/L	Texas
Senior Solutions – Boise Senior Activities Center	Senior	R/L	Idaho
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center	Minority	N	
Southern Area Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Virginia

Organizations Engaged in DTV Coupon Program Education and Outreach	Demographic	National or Regional/Local	State
			Alabama, Alaska, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Michigan, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia
Southern Technology Council/Southern Growth Policy Board	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	
Special Olympics	Disabled	N	
State Higher Education Agency	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	New Mexico
Tanana Valley Baptist Association		R/L	Alaska
Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc.	Disabled	N	
The Church of the Damascus Road Reentry AfterCare Ministry		R/L	Iowa
The H. Lawrence Patrick Senior Life and Conference Center	Senior	R/L	North Carolina
The National Grange	Rural	N	
The Satellite Doctor			
The Senior Source/Senior Citizens of Greater Dallas	Senior	R/L	Texas
The STOP Organization	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Virginia
Tulsa Area Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Oklahoma
Twin Cities Public Television		R/L	Minnesota
U.S. Administration on Aging, Region VI	Senior	R/L	Texas
U.S. Department of Commerce		N	
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Administration on Aging	Seniors	N	
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services -ACF/OCS	Economically Disadvantaged	N	
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services- Division of Senior Affairs	Seniors	N	
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/Child Care & Development Fund		N	
U.S. Department of Homeland Security-Federal Emergency Management Agency		N	
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - Detroit Field Office	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Michigan
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - Kentucky Office	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Kentucky
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs	Economically Disadvantaged	N	
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency		N	
U.S. Federal Communications Commission		N	
U.S. Federal Trade Commission		N	
U.S. General Services Administration		N	
U.S. Office of Personnel Management		N	
University of Kentucky		R/L	Kentucky
Univision	Minority	N	
Urbandale Senior Center	Senior	R/L	Iowa
USDA - Food and Nutrition Services	Economically Disadvantaged	N	
USDA-National 4H	Rural	N	
USDA-Rural Development	Rural	N	
Utah Association for Home Care	Senior	R/L	Utah
Utah Eldercare Planning Council	Senior	R/L	Utah
Valley Initiative for Development & Advancement	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Texas
Vegas PBS		R/L	Nevada
Vermont Public Television		R/L	Vermont
Vernon Community Action Council, Inc.	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	Louisiana
Waccamaw EOC, Inc.	Economically Disadvantaged	R/L	South Carolina

Organizations Engaged in DTV Coupon Program Education and Outreach	Demographic	National or Regional/Local	State
Wavy TV		R/L	Virginia
WBGU-TV		R/L	Ohio
WDCW-TV/DT		R/L	Washington, DC
WDSE		R/L	Minnesota
WEDU		R/L	Florida
WEIU-TV		R/L	Illinois
West Alabama Area Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Alabama
West Connecticut Agency on Aging	Senior	R/L	Connecticut
West Virginia Public Broadcasting		R/L	West Virginia
WETP-TV		R/L	Tennessee
WFYI TelePlex		R/L	Indiana
WGTE Public Broadcasting		R/L	Ohio
WGVU/WGVK		R/L	Michigan
White House Faith Based Community Initiatives		N	
WHRO		R/L	Virginia
WIS Television		R/L	South Carolina
Wisconsin Public Television		R/L	Wisconsin
WITF	Senior	R/L	Pennsylvania
WLRN		R/L	Florida
WMHT Educational Telecommunications		R/L	New York
WNIN		R/L	Indiana
WOSU Public Media		R/L	Ohio
WOUB Center for Public Media		R/L	Ohio
WPBS-TV		R/L	New York
WQPT-TV		R/L	Iowa, Illinois
WSIU Public Broadcasting		R/L	Illinois
WSRE-TV		R/L	Florida
WTCI		R/L	Tennessee
WTIU		R/L	Indiana
WTTW11		R/L	Illinois
WTVI		R/L	North Carolina
WTVS Detroit Public Television		R/L	Michigan
WVPT-Virginia's Public Television		R/L	Virginia
WXEL		R/L	Florida
WXXI-TV		R/L	New York
WYES-TV		R/L	Louisiana
Wyoming PBS		R/L	Wyoming
YMCA		N	