

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN KEVIN J. MARTIN**

Re: Implementation of Short-term Analog Flash and Emergency Readiness Act; Establishment of DTV Transition “Analog Nightlight” Program, MB Docket No. 08-255

The Commission has been doing everything it can to minimize the potential burden the digital transition could impose on consumers and maximize their opportunity to benefit from it. Through all of our activities -- policy, enforcement, and consumer outreach – the Commission is dedicated to minimizing the negative impact of the digital television (DTV) transition. The Analog Nightlight Act helps to minimize the burden on viewers by ensuring that those who are not able to receive digital signals after the transition are not left without access to emergency and DTV transition information.

The Commission has been working to ensure that as many Americans as possible – and, in particular, those segments of the population that are predominantly over-the-air viewers including the elderly, people with disabilities, non-English speakers, and minorities – are aware of the upcoming transition. And, based on recent numbers from NAB, it appears that awareness about the transition is growing. NAB reports that the national awareness level is at 92 percent. This is up from 79 percent in January 2008. Awareness is also increasing among Hispanics and African American consumers.

The Order that we adopt today should help mitigate any consumer confusion regarding the transition. I am pleased that we have pre-approved 826 television stations that cover 47 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and 202 designated market areas. Although this is a voluntary program, we have tried to create a simple program that will make it easy for eligible stations to participate and one that will give them sufficient flexibility.

The Commission has worked to ensure that no Americans are left in the dark after the digital transition. I hope that with the help of the rules we adopt in this Order, every viewer will get the information they need to make the transition.

Finally, I want to commend the Media Bureau staff that worked on this item. The President signed the Analog Nightlight Act into law less than a month ago – on December 23, 2008 -- and staff worked around the clock, during the holiday season, to prepare both a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order with record speed. And, this is only just one example of the extraordinary efforts that Commission staff has taken to facilitate a smooth transition. I am proud of the work the Commission has done to promote consumer awareness of the digital transition. All of us, including our government and industry partners need to work together to make sure that no American is left behind in this part of the digital revolution.