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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515-6115

JOHN D. DINGELL, MICHIGAN
CHAIRMAN

January 16, 2008

**Digital Television Transition:
Converter Box Coupons Are Now Available**

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Dear Colleague:

At midnight on February 17, 2009, all full-power television stations in the United States will stop broadcasting in analog format and transmit only digital signals. This digital television ("DTV") transition, mandated by Congress, will ultimately provide all consumers with a variety of benefits, including more and higher-quality broadcast television programming, as well as enhanced public safety communications and more robust wireless service offerings.

Some consumers will need to take steps to ensure that their televisions continue to work after the DTV transition occurs. Consumers who both rely on over-the-air signals for their television viewing *and* have an analog-only television set will need to acquire a DTV converter box to continue to receive local television broadcast signals. The converter box will permit analog-only televisions to receive and display the new digital signals.

Households that subscribe to cable and satellite will not need a converter box to continue to receive service after the DTV transition. Those consumers, however, may want a converter box if they (a) have an analog-only television set and want to be able to receive broadcast television signals over the air when cable or satellite service is not working or (b) want to receive additional channels offered by broadcasters that may not be carried by their cable or satellite provider. Digital technology allows broadcasters to offer multiple channels of programming. Today, many broadcasters are using their digital signals to provide additional programming, such as 24-hour local news or weather channels, alongside their main channels. Those additional channels may not be carried by cable or satellite providers but can be received using a DTV converter box.

Congress established a coupon program to help offset the cost of acquiring a DTV converter box, which is expected to cost between \$50 and \$75. All households are now eligible to apply for and receive two \$40 coupons, each of which may be used to purchase a converter box. If demand for converter box coupons exceeds 22.25 million, an additional 11.25 million coupons will be made available only to households that do not subscribe to a pay TV service.

The telephone number and the Web site address to request DTV converter box coupons, and Web site address for general information about the DTV transition is also included. This and other information is also on the Web site of the Committee on Energy and Commerce at <http://energycommerce.house.gov>.

I encourage you to take steps to ensure that your constituents are adequately informed about the DTV transition. Brochures providing more details about the DTV transition and the converter box coupon program, as well as coupon applications, are available at the Committee on Energy and Commerce, room 2125 Rayburn House Office Building. If you have questions or need further information, please contact Amy Levine of the Committee staff at ext. 6-2424.

Sincerely,


JOHN D. DINGELL
CHAIRMAN

RESOURCES FOR COUPONS AND INFORMATION ON DTV TRANSITION:

To request a coupon by phone: 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009)

To request a coupon by Internet: www.dtv2009.gov