

NHMC Urges Bipartisan Support for Digital TV Delay

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Congress Considers 3-month Delay for Transition

January 23, 2009 - Washington, D.C. – The National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC) wrote letters to the Senate and the House today supporting the DTV Delay Act and the Digital Television Extension Act of 2009. Both bills in each house promote a modest delay to the February 17th DTV transition. The NHMC, one of the country’s foremost Latino media advocacy and civil rights organizations, is urging bipartisan support from Congress as lawmakers consider the three-month delay. “We have learned that there are over two million people on a waiting list to receive their Digital Television (DTV) transition converter box coupons from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA),” lamented Alex Nogales, NHMC President & CEO. Over the last year, the public has experienced many problems with the coupon program. Those that requested coupons early faced limited choices of converter boxes and were forced to choose between expensive boxes or letting their coupons expire. Additionally, consumers have waited anywhere from four to eight weeks to receive the coupons they have requested. “We believe Congress must fix these flaws and restore appropriate funding to the program, before the nation is ready to transition,” emphasized Nogales.

The country’s full-power television stations are currently scheduled to transition from analog broadcast television service to digital broadcast service on February 17th. And although the DTV transition delay may frustrate some key stakeholders, the primary concern should be the public interest. “This modest extension will surely offset some of the harmful effects of what we believe has been a flawed transition,” emphasized Nogales. Latino television viewers make up about one-third of the 21 million American households that rely on antennas to receive over-the-air broadcasts and are among the least prepared for the transition. [To view the support letters that NHMC sent to the Senate and the House, please click here.](#)

The National Hispanic Media Coalition is a non-profit, media advocacy organization established in 1986 in Los Angeles, California. With statewide chapters across the country, the NHMC works to improve the image of American Latinos as portrayed by the media, increase the number of American Latinos employed in all facets of the media industry, and to advocate for media and telecommunications policies that benefit the American Latino community. For more information, please go to www.nhmc.org or call (626) 792-NHMC (6462).

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