

# HIGH TECH DTV COALITION

Alcatel-Lucent • Aloha Partners • Cisco • Dell • Intel • Microsoft • Qualcomm • Texas Instruments • Verizon Wireless  
Information Technology Industry Council • National Association of Manufacturers • Semiconductor Industry Association  
CTIA - The Wireless Association • National Telecommunications Cooperative Association • Business Software Alliance  
Rural Telecom Group

Tuesday, January 16th, 2007

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Jeff Connaughton

202-457-1110

jconnaughton@quinngillespie.com

Brian Peters

202-626-536

bpeters@itic.org

## High Tech Coalition Renews Call for Successful DTV Transition

*Diverse Coalition Outlines Priorities in Letter to Lawmakers*

Washington, DC—The High Tech DTV Coalition today called on Congress to ensure a successful completion of the nation's transition from analog to digital television (DTV). The DTV transition will free up new spectrum for broadband, wireless innovation, and critical public safety needs. In a letter to lawmakers on Capitol Hill, the High Tech DTV Coalition outlined several key goals and priorities, including steadfast support for the February 17, 2009 transition deadline and current auction plans for spectrum freed up by the transition.

"The American public wants Congress to work in a bi-partisan manner to ensure that the most innovative communications technologies are made available as early and widely as possible," said Jeff Connaughton, Executive Director of the High Tech DTV Coalition. "Congress took a tremendous stride towards a new communications future when it passed DTV legislation into law last year. The High Tech DTV Coalition will continue working to ensure that the goals of that legislation are realized, including the February 17, 2009 transition deadline and the January 2007 auction plans."

"The High Tech DTV Coalition is ready to work with Congress towards a successful completion of the nation's transition to digital television," said Rhett Dawson, ITI's President and CEO. "The companies and trade associations in the Coalition seek to ensure that the American public, first responders, and the innovation economy all receive maximum benefit from the DTV transition, which we believe is best achieved by sticking with the DTV hard date and current auction plans. We applaud the bipartisan efforts of the 109th Congress to enact the DTV transition into law, and with just over two years before the February 17, 2009 transition deadline, we want to help ensure the transition stays on target in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress. We are confident the 110th Congress will have success in this endeavor."

"The American public is eagerly awaiting the arrival of digital television on February 17, 2009, consumers and businesses are anxious to benefit from the innovative wireless services that will be offered in the auctioned spectrum, and first responders want interoperability as soon as possible," said George Scalise, President of the Semiconductor Industry Association. "We should stick to the plan the Congress passed after years of deliberation and compromise."

The High Tech DTV Coalition was instrumental in building bipartisan Congressional support for the recently enacted *DTV Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005*, which sets February 17, 2009 as the deadline for the DTV transition. In addition to supporting the hard deadline and current auction plans, the High Tech DTV Coalition also supports 24MHz of spectrum and over \$ 1 billion set aside by the law for public safety. The Coalition's letter also urges lawmakers to reject any proposal that is likely to delay or undermine the transition, or that is likely to diminish the \$12.5 billion in auction revenues that the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projects will be raised from the spectrum.

The High Tech DTV Coalition membership includes Alcatel-Lucent, Aloha Partners, Cisco, Dell, Intel, Microsoft, Qualcomm, Texas Instruments, Verizon Wireless, Information Technology Industry Council, National Association of Manufacturers, Semiconductor Industry Association, CTIA - The Wireless Association, National Telecommunications Cooperative Association, Business Software Alliance, Rural Telecom Group.

### **Background on the DTV Transition**

Analog TV currently operates on channels 2-69 (58 MHz – 806 MHz). DTV is more spectrum efficient, and the DTV transition will enable all TV stations to fit into channels 2-51 (58 – 698 MHz). Thus, the DTV transition will make available 108 MHz of spectrum at channels 52-69 (698 – 806 MHz) for other valuable services. This 108 MHz block of spectrum is commonly referred to as the “700 MHz band.”

Congress set aside 24 MHz of the 700 MHz band exclusively for public safety (24 MHz is a significant amount). Excluding that spectrum previously auctioned or allocated for guard bands, an additional 60 MHz of commercial spectrum is scheduled for auction pursuant to the DTV Transition Act.

The DTV Transition Act directs the FCC to hold an auction for the 60 MHz of commercial spectrum no later than January 28, 2008. The CBO scored the value of the spectrum to be auctioned at \$12.5 billion, while other estimates place the value between \$20-\$30 billion.

The DTV Transition Act provides substantial funding for public safety from the proceeds of the spectrum auction. Specifically, the DTV Transition Act reserves \$1 billion for public safety interoperability systems, \$156 million for a unified national alert system, and \$43.5 million to implement the ENHANCE 911 Act of 2004. In addition, the Warning, Alert, and Response Network Act of 2006 (“WARN Act”) commits \$106 million from the auction for the implementation of the WARN Act.

The DTV Transition Act also establishes a fund of up to \$1.5 billion for up to two \$40 vouchers per household that may be used toward the purchase of digital-to-analog set-top converter boxes.

### **The High Tech DTV Coalition Letter:**

Dear Member of Congress:

In February 2006, the President and Congress passed into law the DTV Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005, which will move our nation from analog to digital television (DTV). The DTV transition will free valuable new spectrum for broadband and new wireless services, critical public safety communications systems, and other beneficial uses.

The High Tech DTV Coalition writes today to announce that we will continue working in the 110th Congress to ensure that the DTV transition reaches successful completion. The High Tech DTV Coalition is comprised of many leading technology companies and trade associations that share several common goals, which have already been enacted into law. In particular, we:

- Support the enacted February 17, 2009 deadline for the DTV transition.
- Support the auction of 700 MHz band spectrum no later than the enacted January 28, 2008 deadline.
- Oppose any proposal that reduces the amount of 700 MHz band spectrum set aside for auction for commercial services.
- Support 24 MHz of spectrum set aside for public safety services.
- Support the \$1 billion of funding for interoperable communications systems in the public safety spectrum, \$156 million for a unified national alert system, and \$43.5 million for enhanced 911 systems, as enacted in the ENHANCE 911 Act of 2004 and the WARN Act of 2006.

The High Tech DTV Coalition applauds Congress for its hard work in enacting these goals into law, and setting our nation on the path to clearing analog television spectrum for advanced wireless and public safety uses. For two decades, Congress has envisioned the economic and public welfare benefits that will flow from the DTV transition. The result of this vision can truly be a “win-win” scenario for all involved – innovative developers of new broadband services, public safety responders, rural users, broadcasters and, most importantly, the American public.

In order to make certain that the American public and all parties achieve maximum benefit from the DTV transition, Congress must remain committed to the goals outlined above. To this end, we urge Congress to reject any proposal that is likely to delay or undermine the transition, or that is likely to diminish the \$12.5 billion in auction revenues that CBO projects will be raised from the spectrum allocated for commercial uses – a substantial portion of which has been allocated to fund interoperable public safety communications.

The deadline for the DTV transition – February 17, 2009 – is still two years away, and more work has to be done in order to ensure a smooth transition. The High Tech DTV Coalition thanks Congress for its previous bipartisan support for the DTV transition, and stands ready to work with you to ensure a smooth transition.

If you or your staff has any questions, please contact Jeff Connaughton, Executive Director of the High Tech DTV Coalition, at 202-457-1110.

Sincerely,

THE HIGH TECH DTV COALITION

###