

Dingell on GAO Digital Television Status Report

Statement of Congressman John D. Dingell, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce

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December 11, 2007

Washington, D.C. – Rep. John D. Dingell (D-MI), Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, released the following statement today in response to a report filed today by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on the status of the digital television (DTV) transition. In the report, the GAO concludes that there is no comprehensive plan or strategy to measure the transition’s progress or results.

“I am deeply troubled by the report’s conclusion that the FCC does not have a comprehensive plan to guide consumers through the digital television transition,” said Dingell. “Moreover, I believe the amount of preparation at all levels of government and industry to address the change and its consequences is hopelessly inadequate. The DTV transition will be successful only if all aspects of government are working together. If this does not happen, it will be the American people – particularly the elderly and poor – who will suffer when their televisions stop functioning on February 18, 2009.”

The Office recommends that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), in conjunction with public and private stakeholders, develop a detailed plan for various aspects of the transition. Although the GAO requested comment from the FCC according to usual procedures, the Commission declined to specifically address the report, instead submitting its own document on the transition.

The Committee on Energy and Commerce has conducted three hearings on the status of the DTV transition, collecting testimony from government officials, retailers, manufacturers, broadcasters and consumer groups.

Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515