

Senate Resolution No. 24

Introduced by Senator Romero

Relative to Digital Television Education Month.

WHEREAS, Under legislation passed by Congress, local broadcast television stations are required to turn off their free analog channels after midnight on February 17, 2009, and continue broadcasting exclusively in the free digital television (DTV) format; and

WHEREAS, DTV is the biggest event in broadcast television technology since the change from a black and white picture to color and will allow stations to offer the communities they serve dramatically clearer pictures and digital sound quality, more channels, interactive capabilities, and data services, including enhanced closed captioning for the hearing impaired; and

WHEREAS, The almost 2,000,000 viewers in California with analog television sets who receive free television signals through rooftop or “rabbit ear” antennae may lose their picture on February 18, 2009, unless they make the transition to DTV through (1) installing a DTV converter box, (2) upgrading to a digital television set, or (3) subscribing to a paid cable, satellite, or telephone company video service; and

WHEREAS, A DTV converter box is an easy-to-install electronic device that allows older television sets to receive the new digital signal; and

WHEREAS, Every California household can apply for up to two forty dollar (\$40) coupons toward the purchase of a DTV converter box at the DTV Web site and telephone center, available on the Internet at www.DTV2009.gov or by telephone at (888) DTV-2009; and

WHEREAS, Coupons toward the purchase of a DTV converter must be requested by March 31, 2009, and be redeemed within three months of receipt; and

WHEREAS, Those Californians most likely to lose their television signal will be senior citizens, non-English-speaking households, the economically disadvantaged, and those living in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, Television stations are a primary source of emergency information for all Californians to receive Amber Alerts, weather warnings, and other disaster information critical to their safety; and

WHEREAS, Local television stations are using various strategies, including media briefings, speakers bureaus, public service announcements, news reports, town hall meetings, partnerships with local service organizations, and other promotional efforts to inform their viewers of the transition, but need assistance to ensure that no California television set goes dark on February 18, 2009, for lack of a converter; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the Senate stresses the need for local television stations, electronics retailers, and affected groups to educate constituents about the DTV transition and urges all Californians to become aware of the availability of converter box coupons so that no viewer is left without access to emergency information through their television signal; and be it further

Resolved, That the Senate designates May 2008 as Digital Television Education Month in the state and that public officials and the people of the state are encouraged to become informed during the month about the DTV transition by using information resources, including their local television stations, the DTV Web site and telephone center, and the DTV Answers Road Show that will be visiting communities across California; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

Senate Resolution No. 24 read and adopted by the Senate May 1, 2008.

Attest: _____
Secretary of the Senate