



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Chief Information Officer

Washington, D.C. 20230

January 10, 2008

Ms. Susan E. Dudley
Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Ms. Dudley:

The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) requests expedited review of the proposed information collection request, "Converter Box Coupon Program-Consumer and Retailer Pilot Test Surveys." The requested date for the expedited review is January 25, 2008.

The Digital Television Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005 (the Act) requires NTIA to create a program to provide coupons for consumers to purchase digital-to-analog converter boxes. The converter boxes are necessary for consumers who wish to continue receiving broadcast programming over the air using analog-only television sets after February 17, 2009. After this date television stations are required by law to cease analog broadcasting. Without the converter boxes, consumers with analog-only television sets will be unable to view television broadcasts over-the-air. The Act states that households may request coupons between January 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009.

One critical aspect of testing the program prior to full launch in all markets in early February, 2008 is a "live pilot" test. This test involves a limited number of volunteers who will apply for the coupon, receive the coupon through the U.S. mail, and attempt to redeem the coupon at a local retailer for an "eligible" converter box. During the pilot test, volunteers will be asked to complete a survey regarding their experience in applying for and receiving the coupon, and purchasing the converter box at a participating retail outlet. The pilot test will also solicit feedback from participating retailers regarding their experience in redeeming the coupons, inventory issues, and employee training support.

Without testing the program prior to full-scale launch, NTIA cannot determine the strengths and weaknesses in the process. The pilot test is intended to work out any problems at the earliest stage possible. Only data supplied by consumers and retailers actually using the program can accurately identify where flaws may reside in the process. The survey portion of the pilot test is essential to the success of the pilot, and ultimately, the coupon program.

We appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Suzanne Hilding

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Acting

Chief Information Officer

for