

MINORITY MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL

ORIGINAL

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March 10, 2002

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Hon. Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Ms. Dortch:

RE: MM Docket No. 03-15 (Digital Television)

Pursuant to 47 CFR 51.1206, this will disclose that in connection with these permit-but-disclose proceedings, on behalf of the Diversity and Competition Supporters, MMTC held a meeting March 4, 2003 at 4:30 PM with Commissioner Martin and his Legal Advisor, Catherine C. Bohigian. MMTC was represented by Eduardo Peña, Esq., communications counsel for the League of United Latin American Citizens, and myself.

At the meeting, we presented the germ of a concept to ease the costs to low-income families when analog service is turned off. Many broadcasters will need, or seek, additional time to roll out their service to cover an entire market. Rather than imposing forfeitures or onerous short-term deadlines, the Commission could grant extensions to these broadcasters contingent upon their payment into a fund that would provide equipment vouchers for low-income families (— those receiving food stamps, or whose children receive free school lunches). The vouchers could be used to purchase DTV-ready sets or converter boxes. The payments would be less than the value to a broadcaster of the additional roll-out time, but sufficient in value to subsidize a considerable number of vouchers. Making low income families early DTV adopters would reduce the time it would take to secure 85% DTV adoption in a market. Thus, broadcasters would realize cost savings, low income families most dependent on over-the-air television would not have to choose between financial hardship or the absence of television, and the DTV conversion process would be speeded up.

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An original and two copies of this letter are being filed with the Secretary.

Sincerely,

David Honig
Executive Director

cc: Hon. Kevin Martin
Catherine Bohigian, Esq.
Wanda Hardy (with floppy disk)
Qualex International (with floppy disk)

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