

STATEMENT
OF
COMMISSIONER JAMES H. QUELLO

Re: Digital Television Transmission Standards

I commend Commissioner Ness for her continued commitment to the timely setting of a standard for digital television transmission.

The introduction of digital television will be a watershed event in the evolution of telecommunications for many reasons. For the majority of Americans who do not currently have a personal computer in their homes, it will make available a host of new choices in both programming and nonprogramming services. For broadcasters, it represents their ticket to the Information Age, better enabling them to compete with the plethora of services available over nonbroadcast technologies. And for the economy, it means a big boost through the introduction of a vibrant new product whose production will generate thousands of new jobs.

So let me underline something I have said many, many times before: **this Commission must act, and act promptly, to adopt a digital television transmission standard.**

I am certainly not opposed to allowing the affected parties one last, incremental period of time to see if their remaining differences can be worked out. Indeed, I know they have intended to do so and I for one am confident that a reasonable accommodation is achievable.

But here is what I am opposed to. I am opposed to delaying Commission action on this matter beyond the end of this one last negotiation period.

I therefore believe that allowing for further discussions, with a report on their success or failure by Thanksgiving, is an appropriate way to proceed. But I will go one step further. Regardless of whether these final discussions are productive or not, I am prepared to move that this issue be presented to the Commission for its consideration and vote at our December open Commission meeting.