

Senator Hardiman offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 151.

A resolution to declare February 20, 2008, as Digital Transition Day.

Whereas, In 1996, Congress and the President mandated that television broadcasters end the transmission of analog signals by February 17, 2009, and complete a national transition to all digital broadcasting; and

Whereas, The effects of this transition and deadline will be felt directly by approximately 1.5 million Michigan citizens in 600,000 households which currently rely exclusively on analog or over-the-air signals for their televised local news, emergency information, community programming, and other services; and

Whereas, These Michigan citizens are disproportionately poor, elderly, in need of assistance, or reside in rural areas and would be negatively impacted by the loss of access to this news, information, and broadcasting services; and

Whereas, There is a public purpose in keeping all members of Michigan society informed, prepared with vital news, and able to participate in the lives of their communities. Moreover, there is also a need to inform all Michigan citizens of the changeover and deadline, as well as a need for an effective comprehensive public awareness campaign, including technical assistance, for those citizens who desire to continue to receive their television signals free over the air; and

Whereas, Michigan broadcasters are engaged in such a public awareness campaign and have built a strong public-private partnership with other stakeholders to spread the knowledge of this issue and to encourage community and neighborhood efforts to help those most affected by this transition; and

Whereas, The Michigan Association of Broadcasters, its members, and other stakeholders are leading this public awareness campaign and fulfilling an important public role by helping citizens across our state and in each Senate district to hopefully ensure no citizen is left behind in this change; and

Whereas, The Michigan Senate desires to honor this public awareness campaign and all the efforts to assist fellow Michigianians in this transition and to commend the Michigan Association of Broadcasters and all those who are partners with it in this regard; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we hereby declare the twentieth day of February two thousand and eight as Digital Transition Day. We also commend the Michigan Association of Broadcasters and their partners for their service to citizens of this state in preparing for the conversion to digital broadcasting and helping to ensure that no Michigan citizen is left without a television signal after the transition date; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Michigan Association of Broadcasters as evidence of our appreciation and respect for their efforts and those of their partners.