



Gregory J. Nickels
Mayor of Seattle

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Rite-Aid
attn. District Manager Brian Slowinsky
Seattle, WA 0

Dear local electronics retailers:

On February 17, local television broadcasters in Seattle and across the country will convert to new digital signals, providing additional channels, extended features, and clearer pictures to viewers of free, over-the-air TV. In order to continue watching local news, entertainment and educational programming after that date, many households will have to install new DTV converter boxes. This past year, the federal government provided \$40 coupons to help consumers defray converter box costs.

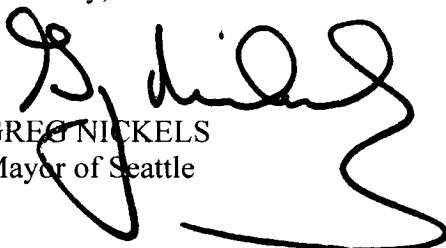
However, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has announced that its coupon program has effectively run out of money. Consumers who have not already applied for coupons will be unable to get these discount vouchers in time for the Feb. 17 transition, if at all.

While some Internet and brick-and-mortar retailers throughout the country are offering DTV converter boxes for sale at \$40 each, many retailers in the Seattle area have opted to carry only the more expensive boxes, in the range of \$60 and higher.

The city is concerned that this decision by local retailers will cause an economic hardship for many lower-income households and individuals, including seniors and people with disabilities. Therefore, we call upon local retailers to offer for sale at least one DTV converter box model, equipped with closed captioning and analog pass-through capabilities, in the \$40-\$45 price range.

In many cases, TV is a basic necessity, not a luxury – providing local news, weather and emergency broadcast information which nobody in our community should be without. We strongly encourage our local retailers to do the right thing in this matter.

Sincerely,



GREG NICKELS
Mayor of Seattle