

Sinclair Files Petition With the FCC; Modification To Digital Television Rules Urged

BALTIMORE, Oct. 11 /PRNewswire/ -- Sinclair Broadcast Group, Inc. (Nasdaq: SBGI) today announced that it has filed a petition with the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") urging the Commission to modify its digital television rules to give broadcasters the flexibility to transmit their digital signals using COFDM digital modulation technology. Sinclair decided to file the petition after conducting a series of investigative digital television reception tests at 40 sites in Baltimore over the past several months. The tests were designed to compare the ease of reception between the currently designated ATSC 8VSB modulation standard and the DVB-T COFDM modulation standard. "We became concerned that the ATSC 8VSB standard could not replicate the same ease of reception, as provided under the current NTSC standard, particularly as it relates to areas within urban environments," commented Nat Ostroff, Vice President of New Technology at Sinclair.

Mr. Ostroff continued, "The purpose of conducting the tests was to raise the visibility of this potentially major obstacle to the digital television rollout. The tests, which were conducted within Baltimore's Grade A and Grade B contours using existing consumer indoor antennas, showed that 8VSB failed consistently where complex multi-path existed, while COFDM provided a reliable picture, even at the fringes of coverage."

David Smith, President of Sinclair, stated, "We believe that filing this petition is the right thing to do for the public, the broadcasting industry and Sinclair. We cannot stand idly by knowing that the designated digital transmission standard, 8VSB, cannot easily be received based on currently available receiver technology. As of today, no consumer electronics manufacturer has proven that they have the technology to address the multi-path issues. The benchmark for digital television reception has been raised by the COFDM standard and broadcasters should be allowed to use that technology. Based on the Consumer Electronics Manufacturing Association ("CEMA") model for 8VSB reception, it is estimated that the additional cost to the consumer for an outdoor antenna and rotor to receive 8VSB versus COFDM is approximately \$400 per household, representing a \$40 billion tax on the American television viewing public."

The petition, filed today with the FCC, contains signatures from groups representing 300 television stations. "We fully expect there will be more to follow, including businesses from outside our industry," commented Mr. Smith. Sinclair's petition argues for the COFDM digital standard, a standard that is more robust and more reliable than today's analog system and which allows for digital television to be easily received by the public, clearly a requirement by the consumer and therefore a requirement for the successful rollout of digital television.

Sinclair Broadcast Group, Inc. is a diversified broadcasting company that currently owns or programs 58 television and 52 radio stations. Upon completion of all pending transactions, Sinclair will own or program 59 television stations in 38 separate markets and 6 radio stations in one market. Sinclair's television group reaches approximately 24.4% of U.S. television households and includes ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, WB, and UPN affiliates.

SOURCE Sinclair Broadcast Group, Inc.

Web site: <http://www.sbgi.net>

Company News On-Call: <http://www.prnewswire.com/comp/110203.html> or fax, 800-758-5804, ext. 110203

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