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## American Homeowners Foundation

*SERVING THE INTERESTS OF HOMEOWNERS AND FUTURE HOMEOWNERS SINCE 1984*

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To: FCC Docket Office  
1919 M St., N.W.  
Room 222  
Washington, D.C. 20554  
From: Paul Christensen, Vice President, Marketing  
Date: July 11, 1996  
By fax  
Re: Docket # ~~87-276~~ 87-268

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JUL 11 1996

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

The comments of the Foundation regarding Docket # 87-276 follow i

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Before the Federal Communications Commission

Washington, D.C. 20544

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OFFICE OF SECRETARY**

In the matter of advanced television systems and their impact upon the existing TV broadcast service

MM Docket No. 87-276

### **Comments of the American Homeowners Foundation**

The American Homeowners Foundation is an education and research organization founded in 1984. The Foundation's mission is to serve the interests of the nation's 65 million homeowners and millions more future homeowners. The Foundation researches issues that impact home ownership and homeowners and publishes books, special studies, a newsletter and other documents to help our members, other homeowners and federal, state and local policymakers.

The use of computers in the home is growing very rapidly. They are used for many different purposes, including children's education, taxes, family budgeting, entertainment, and increasingly, home based businesses. Many parents consider the types of educational information available through the computer its access to the Internet to be a desirable alternative to the offerings of broadcast TV.

Prices for complete computer systems have dropped recently to as low as \$1,000. As the prices have dropped computers are becoming affordable to a rapidly growing share of America's homeowners. At present rates of price declines they will soon be affordable to virtually all homeowners. At the same time

new applications for computers are being developed, making them even more valuable tools for homeowners.

The Federal Communications Commission is considering recommendations from the broadcast industry, foreign television manufacturers and the several domestic television manufacturers (the ACATS Coalition) regarding the transmission of digital quality television. A coalition of computer manufacturers and software publishers (the CICATS Coalition) recommends alternative standards for the transmission of digital quality television. We understand from some computer companies that the ACATS proposals could add as much as \$400 to the price of a computer to make it compatible with the ACATS recommended standards, while the alternative CICATS recommendations would very little to the computers costs.

Given the FCC's mandate under the Communications Act of 1934 to **regulate communications in the public interest...** and to **develop broadcast services at reasonable rates** (our emphasis added), it is clear that the FCC should decide in favor of minimal standards that impose the minimum overall compliance costs while facilitating the access through as many mediums as possible. As a medium that is increasingly multitasked, a computer and monitor which can serve in a variety of other constructive capacities and could perhaps incorporate broadcast TV into other task formats would seem to be a desirable and cost effective medium

In addition a rapidly growing number of homeowners work in the domestic computing sector. Unlike homeowners who work in the domestic television manufacturing sector, their employers are net exporters. More jobs for more American homeowners will therefor be created by policies that increase the U.S. demand for computers than will be created by policies that increase the U.S. demand for televisions since more demand for the latter mostly creates jobs for the workers of our trading partners.