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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

February 4, 1997

RECEIVED

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Frederick C. Boucher  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2245 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-4609

FEB 12 1997

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Dear Congressman Boucher:

Thank you for your letter, on behalf of your constituent, WCYB, Bristol, Virginia. Your letter expresses strong support of WCYB's request that the Commission allot channel 9 to WCYB for the broadcast of digital television.

On July 25, 1996, the Commission proposed policies for allotting channels for DTV service and also provided a draft DTV Table of Allotments. (Sixth Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making in MM Docket No. 87-268, FCC No. 96-317, released August 14, 1996). In that action, the Commission proposed to provide all existing television broadcasters with a second 6 MHz channel for digital broadcasting. The Commission's plan for allotment of DTV channels would provide station WCYB, currently operating on VHF channel 5, UHF channel 23 for the broadcast of digital television. Although our draft Table of Allotments is based on the principles of full accommodation for existing broadcasters, replication of existing broadcast service area, and spectrum efficiency, we recognize that individual situations may have special circumstances that call for adjustments to the table. While the DTV Table provides specific pairings between existing NTSC channels and new DTV frequencies, we believe there should be flexibility to accommodate changes to the DTV Table of Allotments. We therefore intend to accommodate requests for channel adjustments, where possible and appropriate.

The Commission has been made aware of the concerns of WCYB regarding adequate coverage using UHF frequencies in areas of mountainous terrain and is currently examining the proposal to provide VHF channel 9 for WCYB in lieu of channel 23. Please be assured that we are carefully evaluating all available alternatives for meeting the needs of broadcasters as we develop the DTV Table of Allotments.

We will also include a copy of your letter in MM Docket No. 87-268. Thank you again for your interest in this matter.

Sincerely,

Reed E. Hundt  
Chairman

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## CONGRESSIONAL REPLY COVER SHEET

**FCC Control No.:** 9606997

**Senate/House:** [H]

**Due Date:** 1/24/94

**Subcommittee Member:** [Y]

**Incoming:** Letter from Congressman Rick Boucher expressing support of WCYB's request that the Commission allot channel 9 to WCYB for the broadcast of digital television. WCYB which is located in a mountainous area, is concerned that it may not be able to provide adequate coverage using UHF frequencies since UHF frequencies have more difficulty propagating over mountainous terrain than VHF frequencies.

**Subject:** Sixth Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making, MM Docket No. 87-268, FCC No. 96-317 (released August 14, 1996).

**Background:** On July 25, 1996, the Commission proposed guidelines for assigning frequencies for DTV and also provided a draft DTV Table of Allotments. The Commission proposed to provide all existing television broadcasters with access to a 6 MHz channel for digital broadcasting on channels 7 to 51. This would permit the eventual recovery of 138 MHz of spectrum nationwide including 60 MHz from channels 60 through 69. The Commission's draft DTV Table assigns station WCYB UHF channel 23 for digital broadcasting.

**Outgoing:** We state that the Commission has been made aware of the concerns of WCYB regarding adequate coverage using UHF frequencies and that we are currently examining the proposal to provide VHF channel 9 for WCYB in lieu of channel 23.

**Bureau:** Office of Engineering and Technology

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RICK BOUCHER  
9TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

December 24, 1996

Chairman Reed E. Hundt  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W. Room 814  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Reed:

I have been following with great interest the Commission's consideration of rules that will govern the transition from analog TV broadcasting to digital TV broadcasting in the United States. This letter addresses a critical aspect of this transition; the assignment of digital TV channels to existing television stations. Specifically, I am writing in strong support of a filing by one of my constituents, WCYB, Bristol, Virginia, requesting that you allot channel 9 to that station for the broadcast of digital television.

More than one year ago, I sent to you a letter urging that you ensure that the Commission's allocation for digital TV channels does not result in a significant loss of geographic coverage for existing television stations. I explained that WCYB currently broadcasts in the VHF spectrum and that an allocation of UHF spectrum to WCYB for the broadcast of digital television would result in a significant reduction in the number of people able to receive WCYB's over-the-air signal. This result is not only unfair to WCYB but also to the tens of thousands of people who will lose WCYB's signal.

The Appalachian mountains traverse a large portion of my district with concentrations of people residing in the valleys of those mountains. Because of this mountainous terrain, television broadcasters in this region experience a range of serious signal coverage problems.

UHF signals, although generally more powerful than VHF signals, do not carry well over mountains. VHF signals, on the other hand, bend more easily than UHF stations and are, therefore, more suitable for the terrain in my district. In light of these facts, it is vital that WCYB be permitted to continue to broadcast in the VHF spectrum for digital TV to avoid a significant loss of signal coverage. According to WCYB's engineers, channel 9 can be used by WCYB for digital television broadcasting without causing interference to any other station.

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Letter to Reed E. Hundt

December 24, 1996

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This is a matter of great importance to me and to my constituents. I hope that you will be sensitive to this matter as you promulgate rules for the assignment of digital TV channels and that you will ensure that all of WCYB's viewers continue to receive the broadcasts on which they now rely.

I would appreciate your keeping me informed of your progress. With kind personal regards and best wishes, I remain

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Boucher". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

Rick Boucher  
Member of Congress