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With all the hype and momentum associated with the delay in the transition to DTV, it was truly a surprising turn of events when the House today failed to pass the DTV date-change bill, keeping the move to DTV of all Full Power TV stations on February 17. Despite the wining of the networks and the ill informed senate, there were enough members of congress that saw fit to leave the DTV Transition date alone.

The principal argument from the networks for the delay to June was that the February date put the transition to digital in the middle of the broadcast season and they wanted it to happen in the summer when less folks would be likely to be watching. Many in the Senate and, according to our sources in the White House, the main reason for delay to the June 12 was that the NTIA had run out of funds for converter boxes. One source said that they didn't think the public was fully informed about the transition and that the additional time was necessary. When we got done laughing over that last input, they hung up on us. Go figure.

In an e-mail sent to both houses of congress and the president of the United States by Tech-Notes, we stated that Congress has confused the public enough and that it would serve NO useful purpose to confuse them any further by delaying the transition four more months.

According our sources, only 61% of the House members voted in favor of the date change whereas a 2/3 majority (66.66%) was required for passage.

So on February 17th, approximately 20% of all licensed television stations in the US will be required to turn off their analog transmitters, remaining on the air strictly with digital

modulation. The remaining 80% are Class A (3 KW), Low Power (1 KW) and all translators. There is no official word as to when these latter delivery devices will be required to make the change, but many are addressing the issue.

This will come as a relief to many stations that had not budgeted for the continued operation of the second transmitter or those who had to vacate the additional tower space shortly after the February date: things can now proceed as had been planned.

If you'd like to see more, John Eggerton of Broadcasting & Cable has more:

<http://tinyurl.com/DTVVoteFailure>

So

What do you think?



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Note: Some of the material in this edition was gleaned from one or more of the following internet mailing lists: broadcast@radiolists.net, radio-tech@broadcast.net, opendtv@freelists.org, TV-tech@broadcast.net.



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