



For Immediate Release:

Contact: Tania Panczyk-Collins, APTS, 202-654-4222 tpanczyk@apts.org
Lea Sloan, PBS, 703-739-5021 lsloan@pbs.org
Matthew M. Polka, ACA, 412-922-8300 Ext. 14 mpolka@americancable.org

Public Television and American Cable Association Finalize Major Digital Carriage Agreement

FCC Commissioner Adelstein Commends Both Sides for Reaching Common Ground

WASHINGTON—August 8, 2007—The Association of Public Television Stations (APTS) and the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) finalized a major digital cable carriage agreement with the American Cable Association (ACA), the organizations announced today.

“The agreement assures that millions more Americans will have access to the rich diversity of high quality, non-commercial digital and high-definition television programming for the foreseeable future,” said APTS President and CEO John Lawson. “I’d like to thank Matt Polka for his leadership in reaching this important agreement on behalf of his membership and the customers they serve.”

The deal is expected to be ratified and adopted by members of the ACA and Public Television stations by mid-October.

“I congratulate ACA, APTS and PBS for this historic carriage agreement,” said FCC Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein. “Families, particularly parents and children in small towns and rural areas, will now get to enjoy the benefits of Public Television’s multiple streams of quality, first-rate programming. It’s a win-win for cable operators, public broadcasters and, most importantly, the viewing public. Two years ago, I worked hard to facilitate a similar agreement between NCTA [National Cable and Telecommunications Association] and APTS. Public broadcasters and cable operators have told me the agreement has really worked out well for both sides. The flexibility given to cable operators to optimize their channel capacity is very much worth the additional families who get to watch non-duplicative Public Television and independent programming.”

Adelstein continued: “I understand this agreement took time and compromise on both sides. I commend the ACA and Public Television stations for working through the details to reach common ground. I especially commend the committed leadership of Matt Polka from ACA and John Lawson from APTS for reaching such a comprehensive and long-term agreement. Marketplace agreements, such as this, demonstrate that independent cable operators are serious about negotiating carriage for quality programming and doing what’s best for their subscribers.”

The 10-year agreement would apply to participating ACA members' high-definition cable systems and include DTV carriage commitments of Public Television stations both pre- and post-digital TV transition. Under the agreement, cable operators would carry the primary signal of the DTV station on the lowest priced tier, while multicast channels would be carried on the tier where other multicast channels are carried.

PBS President and CEO Paula Kerger said: "This agreement provides an important additional tool for Public Television stations to serve their communities and will help ensure that every household in the country will reap the benefits of the digital transition. Public Television is committed to offering universal, free access to a growing variety of content and services. We are grateful to the ACA and APTS for their part in creating this agreement, which is crucial to our ability to fulfill this mission."

ACA President and CEO Matthew M. Polka added: "This agreement demonstrates independent cable's support for Public Television's innovative digital programming and the value-added by local public stations through carriage on independent cable systems."

ACA's nearly 1,100 member companies serve about 8 million subscribers in all 50 states. There are 361 Public Television stations in the U.S.

###