

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer Advisory Committee
Recommendation Regarding Support of Petition for Rulemaking Filed by the
American Council of the Blind

On June 27, 2008 the Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) adopted the following recommendation on access to televised emergency information:

Consumer Advisory Committee Recommendation

Regarding Access to Televised Emergency Information

By People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

The Consumer Advisory Committee respectfully requests that the FCC take action to ensure that individuals who are blind or have low vision have access to televised emergency programming. To accomplish this, the FCC needs to identify methods to make such on-screen-displayed text -- which includes written or other non-verbal information (whether scrolled or displayed as characters or images) that appears on a television screen -- accessible to this population. Such text should include information provided

- * during regular programming when such information is provided to afford viewers with warnings of and instructions on how to respond to emergency or hazardous conditions;
- * during local and national news bulletins; and
- * during the broadcasting of any other information the Commission deems appropriate.

On October 3, 2008 the American Council of the Blind petitioned the FCC to begin the rule making process on this very issue. This petition utilized the CAC's adopted recommendations. The Consumer Advisory Committee supports this petition and urges the FCC to move forward in its rule making process to insure that people who are blind or visually impaired have access to televised emergency information.

Adopted: November 14, 2008 (3 members abstaining)

Debra R. Berlyn, Chairperson
Consumer Advisory Committee