

**ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 142**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

INTRODUCED MARCH 20, 1997

**By Assemblymen DeCROCE and WISNIEWSKI**

1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** urging the Congress of the United States and  
2 the Federal Communications Commission to reject free television  
3 broadcast auctioning.

4

5 **WHEREAS**, The "Communications Act of 1934" authorized the federal  
6 government to issue licenses for the use of free broadcast spectrum; and

7 **WHEREAS**, In return for the use of that one one-hundredth of total spectrum,  
8 broadcasters committed to operate in the public interest by airing public  
9 service announcements; reporting on news, weather, and sports; offering  
10 emergency information; informing consumers; supporting charitable drives;  
11 and performing countless other services without expense to the viewer; and

12 **WHEREAS**, In an attempt to raise additional revenue to balance the federal  
13 budget, Congress is considering a proposal to auction off airwaves  
14 designated for high definition television; and

15 **WHEREAS**, In order to offer viewers high definition television, the transition to  
16 a digital signal will require a significant investment and expenditure by each  
17 locally-owned station for new equipment; and

18 **WHEREAS**, If broadcasters must compete in an auction against giant  
19 communications companies who charge consumers for their services, the  
20 combined cost of new equipment and airwave use may bankrupt local  
21 stations and threaten the existence of free television; and

22 **WHEREAS**, The American system of broadcasting has been one of the most  
23 successful experiments in public/private enterprise in this Nation's history;  
24 and

25 **WHEREAS**, More Americans have access to a television set than a telephone,  
26 and it is estimated that over 30 percent of Americans rely on free local  
27 television as their sole source of news, entertainment, and information; and

28 **WHEREAS**, American broadcast television is fundamentally different from all  
29 other forms of communications technology because it is free to the  
30 consumer; and

31 **WHEREAS**, It is altogether fitting and proper and in the public interest for this  
32 House to oppose any action such as spectrum auctions that would  
33 endanger the continued access of all Americans to free television and insist  
34 that a spectrum auction be debated on its merits, not on its revenue  
35 potential; now, therefore,

1

2 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

3

4 1. This House opposes any action such as spectrum auctions that would  
5 endanger the continued access of all Americans to free television and insists  
6 that a spectrum auction be debated on its merits, not on its revenue potential.

7

8 2. This House urges the Congress of the United States and the Federal  
9 Communications Commission to reject free television broadcast auctioning.

10

11 3. Duly authenticated copies of this resolution, signed by the Speaker of  
12 the General Assembly and attested to by the Clerk thereof, shall be  
13 transmitted to the presiding officers of the United States Senate and House of  
14 Representatives, the chairs of the appropriate standing committees of  
15 Congress, each member of Congress elected thereto from New Jersey, and  
16 the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission.

17

18

19

STATEMENT

20

21 This Assembly resolution urges the Congress of the United States and the  
22 Federal Communications Commission to reject free television broadcast  
23 auctioning.

24

25

26

\_\_\_\_\_

27

28 Urges Congress and FCC to reject free television broadcast auctioning.