

This Week's Friday Report



San Francisco Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

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FRIDAY REPORT: December 05, 2008

WEATHER

San Francisco Weekend Weather

Saturday ⁶	Sunday ⁷
 High 65°F Low 48°F Mostly Sunny Precip: 0%	 High 62°F Low 49°F Mostly Sunny Precip: 10%

FEATURED PROJECT

Recycle



NEWS

SFHCC Participates in Recycling Press Conference for bottlesandcans.com

The SFHCC participated in the launch of the Bottles & Cans Recycling press conference in Sacramento with the San Joaquin and Orange County Hispanic Chambers of Commerce to support the partnership between the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce and the California Department of Conservation.



Photo L to R: Joel Ayala - CEO California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce Bridgett Luther - Director, Department of Conservation, Ken Macias - Chairman CHCC, Priscilla Lopez - CEO Orange County HCC Richard Ventura - San Francisco HCC, Mark Martinez - CEO San Joaquin HCC

Today marked the commitment between all participants to education Hispanic business owners in the area of recycling. "We are at a point where we must focus on decreasing our waste while lower our carbon emissions footprint. Understanding how to properly recycle bottles and cans is a great way to enter the revolution of a greener lifestyle," said Richard Ventura, President and C.E.O. of San Francisco Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Did you know the DOC has a one-stop shop for official notices regarding California's beverage container recycling program? You'll find Frequently Asked Questions regarding the latest legislation, information for recycling centers, curbside operators and other collection programs, statistics, and a host of other information affecting beverage manufacturers, dealers, retailers and recyclers. Just visit <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dor/notices/Pages/index.aspx>

SFHCC Seeks New Board Candidates for 2009

The San Francisco Hispanic Chamber of Commerce seeks prospective board members to fill seats available in 2009. The SFHCC seeks individuals that can provide a value to the organization. We would like each candidate to have skills and expertise in 2 or more of the following areas:

- Computers / Technology
- Finance Development/Fundraising
- Government Affairs
- Media/ Public Relations
- Organizational Development
- Written Communications

The General Board meets 4 times a year and participates in the annual Board Retreat. For more information,

contact the SFHCC at 415-278-9611 or by email to staff@sfhcc.com.

Apply. Buy. Try. Consumers Urged to Prepare for the Switch to Digital TV Before the End of the Year -- Data Finds Many Hispanic Households Still Need to Prepare for the Switch

By Meredith Baker

The switch to all-digital broadcasting is quickly approaching and will offer consumers a clearer picture and more programming choices. Television viewers with analog TV sets using a rooftop antenna or "rabbit ears" are at risk of losing their TV signal if they do not act now or before the end of year to request their converter box coupons.

According to Nielsen data, more than 1.7 million Hispanic households are completely unready for the switch. This means that on February 17th, 2009 when the digital television transition occurs one ? or all TVs ? in these homes will lose their signal.

But consumers who want to keep using their analog TVs with an antenna after the transition can purchase a TV converter box using a \$40 government coupon. The U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration, which is responsible for running the TV Converter Box Coupon Program, is providing up to two coupons per household upon request and recommends the following three steps:

Step 1: Apply

Apply for a TV Converter Box coupon now. Coupons are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Each household can apply for up to two coupons online at www.DTV2009.gov, by calling 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009), via fax at 1-877-DTV-4ME2 (1-877-388-4632), or by mail to PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208. Deaf or hard of hearing callers may dial 1-877-530-2634 (English TTY) or 1-866-495-1161 (Spanish TTY).

Step 2: Buy

Consumers should buy their converter box soon after their coupon(s) arrive in the mail. Consumers will receive a list of nearby participating retailers with their coupons. They should do their research swiftly and make a timely purchase that's right for them. Coupons expire in 90 days from the date printed on the card.

Step 3: Try

Once a consumer has purchased a TV converter box, they should try the box on their analog TV. This provides the opportunity to test the box and troubleshoot potential problems prior to the transition date. Installing a converter box also provides the immediate benefits of a clearer picture and more channels, where available. If you need further technical help, the Federal Communications Commission provides a useful guide at <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/troubleshootguide.html>.

While every situation is unique, consumers should allow a minimum of six weeks to ensure that their television signal continues to work prior to the nation switching to all digital broadcasting on February 17, 2009. I urge all consumers to apply, buy and try today.

Meredith Baker is the assistant secretary for communications and information at the U.S. Department of Commerce.

SBA Applauds Treasury Action to Bolster Secondary Market for Small Business Loans -- Federal Reserve Facility Will Support Consumer, Small Business Lending

WASHINGTON

A plan by the Treasury and the Federal Reserve to improve market conditions for asset-backed securities ? including those composed of SBA-backed small business loans ? should be welcome news to credit-hungry small businesses across the country, said U.S. Small Business Administration Acting Administrator Sandy K. Baruah.

The plan, announced today by Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson, establishes the Term Asset-Backed Securities Loan Facility, or TALF, to breathe new life into a secondary market that essentially ground to a halt in October. The TALF would make loans to investors who purchase asset-backed securities made up of small business loans guaranteed by SBA, auto loans, student loans, or credit card loans. As a result, lenders will find it easier to sell the loans they make, and use the proceeds of those sales to make new loans.

"The approach announced today is a significant and important breakthrough in our efforts to help unclog the secondary market and to help restore the flow of credit and credit products to normal levels," said Baruah. "This is a big step toward reviving a healthy market for investors who want to purchase secondary market loan pools of SBA loans. I believe it will help restore the flow of buying activity in what has been a disrupted secondary market for SBA-backed loans and generate the liquidity lenders need to step up their lending to small businesses.

"We expect these efforts to help free up the capital both brokers and investors need to purchase new SBA loans," Baruah said. "As this cycle continues, we expect secondary market activity to begin to return to normal levels.

"We will continue to work with the Treasury and the Federal Reserve, and with our partners in the SBA lending industry to reinvigorate the secondary market for SBA guaranteed securities to help craft solutions to bring much needed capital to the nation's small businesses," Baruah said.

About \$4 billion in securities backed by SBA-guaranteed loans are bought and sold in the secondary market each year, with the total outstanding amounting to about \$15 billion. At present, a share of the current year's volume of loans securitized by lenders ? estimated at up to \$3 billion ? is essentially frozen. The resulting lack of liquidity hampers the ability of some of SBA's lending partners to make new SBA-backed loans.

The loans that investors will receive from TALF through this new action can be used to purchase these securities from brokers.

The actions announced today follow steps already taken by SBA, including the recent emergency implementation of LIBOR as a base rate for SBA loans and the development of Weighted Average Coupon pools.

Another Obstacle for Affirmative Action, And Congress Is Prepared to Fight

By Joe Davidson

On Nov. 4, amid all the excitement surrounding Barack Obama's election, a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit struck down a Pentagon program that included a 5 percent set-aside for companies run by African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans and Native Americans. The impact of the decision is unclear; the court's focus on an old Pentagon rule to decide the case created uncertainty about whether the set-aside remains. But if the panel's ruling stands, the implications for minority-owned companies that received almost \$15 billion in fiscal year 2006 in Defense Department contracts could alter a long-standing program that allowed under-represented groups access to lucrative government contracts.

Last month, the panel ruled that the Defense Department erred when it failed to use a "price evaluation adjustment" tool, which allowed the Pentagon to increase bids from white-owned companies by 10 percent before comparing them to firms owned by people of color.

The Defense Department allowed International Computer and Telecommunications, a firm then owned by a Korean American couple, to win a computer contract even though its \$5.75 million bid was \$180,000 more than

one submitted by Rothe Development, a San Antonio company owned by a white woman. Rothe sued the government in 1998. A senior Defense Department official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that at the moment Pentagon officials are confused.

The court talked about the department using "preferential treatment based on race," but with the price tool defunct, that's not the case. "We don't really know what to do . . ." the official said about the decision. "We're having trouble explaining it." The Pentagon should continue its goal of set-asides for contractors of color until everyone is certain what the panel's ruling means. The Supreme Court has recognized the value of programs designed to right a long series of wrongs that have accumulated over generations. And even though the high court is more conservative now than when some previous affirmative action cases were decided, it doesn't necessarily mean the current court would overturn the decisions that permit affirmative action to continue.

The goal, even at 5 percent, is important because it makes diversity in contracting a priority. Making government acquisition programs work for everyone is not only desirable, but crucial. In last month's ruling, the judges also said that because the Pentagon's set-aside was based on race, the program was subject to a "strict scrutiny" review and it couldn't pass the test. The problem, according to the court, is that "Congress did not have a 'strong basis in evidence' upon which to conclude that DOD [Department of Defense] was a passive participant in pervasive, nationwide racial discrimination -- at least not on the evidence produced by DOD."

Note that the court did not say there is no such discrimination. If the problem is the evidence, Congress should be able to fix that. And that's what Ed Towns plans to do. Towns, now chairman of the House subcommittee on Government Management, Organization and Procurement, is in line to become chairman of the full committee on Oversight and Government Reform. He plans to hold hearings next year and perhaps move legislation that should satisfy the thirst for strict scrutiny. "I question the court's finding that there is little evidence of discrimination in federal contracting," Towns said. "We in Congress hear every day from small and minority-owned businesses who have trouble accessing the federal market, and in fact have held hearings documenting these problems. Next year, Congress should hold hearings and pass whatever laws are necessary to ensure that the federal government can continue to encourage development of small and disadvantaged businesses."

Congress should be able to build a solid record of evidence that demonstrates pervasive, nationwide racial discrimination and pass federal contracting legislation -- hopefully Supreme Court-proof -- to correct it. But whether that record will be enough for an increasingly right-leaning Supreme Court remains to be seen. Affirmative action is like a Timex watch -- it takes a licking but keeps on ticking. Despite this latest ruling, time has not run out on affirmative action yet.

Mayor Newsom Announces Shop SF, Get More Shopping Incentive Program for all Bay Area Residents

12/03/08

Today Mayor Gavin Newsom announced Shop SF, Get More, a city-wide incentive program to encourage local and Bay Area residents to visit, shop, and stay in San Francisco during December and January. The campaign offers special discounts and promotions exclusively for residents of the nine Bay Area counties.

"During these tough economic times, San Francisco is working to ensure that its small businesses remain strong and tourism thrives," said Mayor Newsom. "Shop SF will showcase our world-class dining, museums, events, attractions, and hotels. It's an opportunity to experience all the beauty and excitement of one of the greatest cities in the world."

In order to encourage local and Bay Area residents to shop and buy in San Francisco this holiday season, Shop SF, Get More includes the following special discounts and promotions:

Show Your Zip Code: residents in the nine-county Bay Area are eligible to receive special discounts, by showing their ZIP code at participating merchants.

Parking and Public Transit Discounts: locals and visitors can ride Muni and explore San Francisco on one transfer all day, every Sunday with the Sunday FunDay Pass. Cars entering designated city-owned parking garages receive special validation under the Ride with More, Park for Less incentive program.

Hotels: San Francisco hotels are offering reduced rates, complimentary parking and breakfast, and a variety of discounted holiday packages. In January, select San Francisco hotels will be offering, "3 Nights for the Price of 2."

Restaurants: Through the Show Your Zip Code program, residents are eligible for special promotions at select San Francisco restaurants. In January, "Dine About Town" will offer fixed-price three course lunches and dinners at over 100 restaurants.

Shop Local: Special promotions and shopping events are occurring in unique neighborhood commercial districts across the city, including late night shopping, street lighting events and weekend sidewalk sales.

Museums: free days and free child admissions at many of the city's finest cultural institutions.

Events: enjoy hundreds of holiday events, including classics (Nutcracker, A Christmas Carol), the offbeat (Dance Along Nutcracker, Kung Pao Kosher Comedy) and the diverse (Parol Lantern Festival, Black Nativity).

Available discounts will be compiled on the Convention & Visitors Bureau website, www.onlyinSanFrancisco.com. Shop SF will also be linked on the SF Chamber of Commerce website, and other websites throughout the Bay Area.

FEATURED MEMBERS

Bakery

Lelenita's Cakes, LLC
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P: 415-282-2253

NEW MEMBERS

Chamber members have access to exclusive benefits that build relationships, increase visibility, and generate business leads. They're the first to learn about economic trends and developments that shape the City's business environment and their own companies' growth. And they influence decision makers in San Francisco and beyond, helping ensure that San Francisco means business-in every sense. Welcome additions to the San Francisco Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Memberships can be purchased online using the following link:
<https://sfhccregistration.chamberbusinesssuite.com/>

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Small Business

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