

MULTICHANNEL VIDEO COMPETITION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM BLILEY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 7, 1998

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2921. I would like to begin by commending both Mr. TAUZIN, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Telecommunications, and Mr. COBLE, the Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Courts and Intellectual Property. They have both worked hard to bring this legislation to the floor today, and I thank them for their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation represents a crucial first step in Congress' efforts to reform the laws governing the provision of direct-to-home satellite television and will bring immediate relief to millions of satellite consumers.

More specifically, this legislation addresses the level of copyright royalty fees paid by consumers of satellite services. Aside from the staggering size of these fee increases, the rate levels do not compare favorably to what the cable industry currently pays for identical signals.

At a time when we are counting on the competition that satellite services can bring to consumers, it seems senseless to create additional differences in the costs of programming between these two industries.

The rates that satellite subscribers pay for certain popular programming will certainly rise unless Congress takes action on this legislation. Although the royalty fee increase is already in effect, many satellite carriers have not passed on the full amount of the increases to consumers in anticipation of congressional intervention.

Further, if this situation is not addressed soon, superstations, which remain popular with many consumers, could well be dropped from satellite-delivered programming packages.

Swift action on H.R. 2921 is particularly necessary for the millions of satellite subscribers who, because they reside in rural areas and can receive the affected programming from no other source, will be captive to the rate hikes resulting from higher royalty fees.

This legislation also clarifies the satellite broadcasters' legal standing to sue those who pirate satellite broadcast signals. Signal theft—be it cable or satellite signals—is a serious problem. This provision will help promote the long-term viability of satellite television service.

Mr. Speaker, the Commerce and Judiciary Committees recently joined our counterparts in the Senate in one last effort to gain adoption of a set of more comprehensive changes in the underlying satellite laws this year. I regret to say that this effort failed for both lack of time remaining in this Congress and lack of consensus among the industry players.

But this exercise did create a large degree of agreement on many significant points on which I believe we can build next year. I just would like to state for the record, my firm commitment to revisiting and resolving these issues in a comprehensive manner early next year with the assistance and participation of my good friends and colleagues on the Judiciary

Committee, Mr. TAUZIN and Mr. COBLE in particular.

I have confidence that the two committees can and will work together to enact these important reforms. I can only urge the affected industries to work diligently in the months before the beginning of the next Congress to bury their differences and to lend their cooperation to us.

Mr. Speaker, the reforms contained in H.R. 2921 are a downpayment on the more comprehensive package of changes we hope to bring to the full House early next year. It is a worthy beginning.

I urge the adoption of the bill.

IN SUPPORT OF H. CON. RES. 302, NATIONAL KIDSDAY AND NATIONAL FAMILY MONTH

HON. TIM ROEMER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 8, 1998

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 302, recognizing the importance of children and families in the United States and expressing support for the goals of National KidsDay and National Family Month. I want to thank Representatives PAUL MCHALE, FRANK WOLF, HAROLD FORD, NANCY JOHNSON, and DEBORAH PRYCE, who joined me in introducing this resolution last July, as well as Representative WALTER JONES and the many other Members who helped bring it to the floor today.

We live in an increasingly stressful society these days. Perhaps no one feels this stress more acutely than our Nation's children. The pressures of crime, drugs, violence and broken homes are robbing many children of the joys of childhood. There is a growing concern that too many kids are in crisis, and that no one is speaking out for them or trying to help.

That is what this resolution is all about. It is a simple, straightforward, bipartisan appeal on behalf of the children in our Nation to pay more attention to their needs, to provide them with a healthy and safe environment, and to give them hope for a secure and prosperous future. The resolution also expresses support for two particular initiatives which are being undertaken on behalf of kids: National KidsDay and National Family Month. Both of these initiatives have been created by KidsPeace, our Nation's oldest and largest not-for-profit organization dedicated solely to serving the needs of kids in crisis.

National KidsDay, observed on the third Saturday in September, encourages parents, grandparents and caregivers to spend a day with their children just having fun, and giving them a break from the strains of everyday life. National Family Month is celebrated during the five-week period between Mother's Day and Father's Day. Each week focuses on a specific value that families should provide to their children, including: a safe and secure home; people they can trust; love and value; the power and freedom to grow; and hope for the future.

Mr. Speaker, children are our most precious gift. We cannot afford to let even one child slip through the cracks. KidsPeace and other organizations are doing a wonderful job of reaching out to those children who are most at risk

in society, and helping them develop the courage and skills necessary to overcome crisis. But no matter how hard they try, these organizations cannot take the place of loving parents, stable homes, and a healthy environment in which kids can feel safe, loved and positive about their lives and their futures.

This resolution is small in scope but it is large in symbolism. It sends a message to children that we care about them, we understand their problems, we share their dreams, and we want them to enjoy life to the fullest. As Robert Kennedy said: "When one of us prospers, all of us prosper. When one of us fails, so do we all." I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and give all our children a chance to prosper.

TRIBUTE TO OOIDA

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 8, 1998

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, the Owner-Operator Independent Driver Association represents over 40,000 small business professional truckers across America. On October 9, OOIDA will celebrate 25 years of service at the grand opening of their new headquarters in Grain Valley, Missouri.

I had planned on being present at these very special ceremonies, but unfortunately the schedule of the House will prevent my participation.

The Association provides many services to its members including access to affordable health and truck insurance, training, updates on regulatory changes, and support for resources for operating a successful small business. OOIDA is also an effective advocate on its members behalf before state and federal regulatory and legislative bodies.

We need to work closely with OOIDA and their members, small business operators, to seek passage of legislation that achieves a reduction in the number of toll roads, that enhances the deductibility of meals, travel and health insurance expenses, and legislation that reduces the tax burden on all small entrepreneurs. We must stand with OOIDA to eliminate onerous regulations and as partners to rebuild our transportation infrastructure.

On this day, we offer our appreciation for the outstanding achievements of Jim Johnston, President of OOIDA, OOIDA's board of directors and the independent truck drivers who deliver every day for us all.

HAPPY 11TH ANNIVERSARY TO THE COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 8, 1998

Mr. BURTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to observe and pay tribute on the occasion of the eleventh anniversary of the Council of Khalistan. Wednesday, October 7th, marked eleven years since the Sikh people of Punjab declared their independence from India, naming their new country Khalistan. Immediately after this declaration, they appointed the

Council of Khalistan to lead their struggle for independence. Since then, under the leadership of Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, the Council has conducted a peaceful, democratic, non-violent effort for a free and sovereign Khalistan.

I believe that the breakup of India is inevitable, despite the brutal campaign of state terrorism which is designed to hold it together by force. Even Sharad Pawar, the Leader of the Opposition in the Indian Parliament, recently said that if India does not get its house in order quickly, it could fall apart like the Soviet Union. He joins Nehru biographer Professor Stanley Wolpert, Columbia University Professor Ainslee Embree, and Dr. Jack Wheeler of the Freedom Research Foundation, who have all predicted India's breakup.

India's desperation to keep its multinational state together is showing. Recently the Vishwa Hindu Prashad (VHP), a Hindu fundamentalist organization affiliated with the Fascist RSS, praised the rape of four Catholic nuns in the state of Madhya Pradesh, calling the rapists "patriotic youth" and calling for all foreign missionaries to be expelled from the country. The ruling BJP, which was elected on a Hindu Nationalist platform, is the political wing of the RSS. So much for Indian secularism! Clearly, there is no place for Christians in Indian democracy. There is no place for Sikhs, Muslims, aboriginal Dalits, Tamils, Assamese, Manipuris, or other ethnic and religious minorities either.

Recently, a large group of Sikh and Kashmiri protesters showed up at the United Nations headquarters to protest the visit of Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. They chanted slogans of independence for their people, and they attempted to inform the public about India's human-rights violations. The flyer they circulated read, "A religiously intolerant country can never be democratic."

Earlier this year in New Delhi, at the largest internal protest against Indian nuclear weapons tests, demonstrators carried signs that read, "We are Sikhs, not Indians." This is a strong expression of the Sikh Nation's demand for freedom. Still India continues its efforts to keep the country together by force.

India votes against the United States at the United Nations more often than any other country, except Cuba. It even publicly endorsed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. According to published reports, India has also provided the raw materials for nuclear development to Iran and other anti-American countries.

The Congress should move immediately to support freedom and real stability in this troubled region. We must maintain the sanctions that have been put in place against India. In addition, we should cut off the aid that helped build India's nuclear weapons. My colleagues should also vote to support the Sikhs and Kashmiris in their struggle for freedom by demanding a free and fair plebiscite in those states, so that they themselves can determine their future in a democratic way. This is the only way to make sure that the breakup of India comes about peacefully like the former Soviet Union, not violently. Taken together, these steps will ensure that all the people and nations of South Asia can live in freedom, peace, prosperity, and dignity.

I am placing the article on Sharad Pawar into the RECORD for the information of my colleagues.

[From the India-West, August 7, 1998]

INDIA MAY SUFFER SOVIET FATE: PAWAR

PUNE (PTI)—The leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha Sharad Pawar Aug. 2 expressed the fear that the country might go the erstwhile Soviet Union way unless concerted efforts are taken to strengthen its economy in the wake of international reaction to its carrying out nuclear tests.

Pawar was speaking at a function to release a book, "Hiroshima," by noted Marathi writer D.B. Kher on the after effects of bomb explosion in Japan Aug. 6, 1945.

Pawar said through the erstwhile USSR was a nuclear power it collapsed, and added that India should not become over-confident after the Pokhran-II tests.

He said India should also be very vigilant as the economy of Pakistan was in the doldrums. It might take any dangerous step out of frustration. "We should not forget the fact that Pakistan had a history of aggression against India and hence we should be on guard," he said.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4194,
DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY II

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 1998

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman JERRY LEWIS and Ranking Member LOUIS STOKES, of the Appropriations Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies, for their cooperation in awarding federal funds under the Economic Development Initiative for two of the most heavily-used bike paths in the Boston area.

We have received \$250,000 for the Arlington-Boston bike path and \$150,000 for the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway. Bicycling is very popular in Boston, and throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

There are many tangible benefits to bicycling. It improves health and fitness while reducing traffic congestion, air pollution and commuting time to work each day.

The funding awarded for the bike paths through the Economic Development Initiative will enhance these benefits. The funds awarded for the Arlington-Boston bike path will allow construction to proceed on completing a 15-mile commuter and recreational bike path from Bedford to Boston.

The Arlington-Boston bike path will provide a direct connection to the Charles River and to the existing Dudley Bike Path to downtown Boston along the Watertown Branch of the Boston and Maine Railroad.

The funds awarded for the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway will provide a rail-trail connecting the existing Minuteman Commuter Bikeway in Cambridge with the Charles River Bikeway in Boston, leading to downtown Boston.

It is estimated that an automobile emits 62 pounds of carbon dioxide a year. It is also estimated that the average trip length to work in Boston's Central Business District is 12 miles. For each person who chooses to ride a bike to work rather than drive a car, the air in Bos-

ton is relieved of 12 grams per trip of volatile organic carbon, 14 grams per trip of nitrogen oxides and 120 grams per trip of carbon monoxide.

Mr. Speaker, this clearly demonstrates that bicycling expands the recreational opportunities for Boston area residents, while contributing to a more healthful environment by reducing traffic congestion.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. JESSIE TRICE
ON THE CELEBRATION OF HER
RETIREMENT ON OCTOBER 17,
1998

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 8, 1998

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a distinct privilege to rise and pay tribute to one of my community's unsung heroines, Mrs. Jessie Trice, Director of Miami's Family Health Center. Her countless friends and admirers are honoring her on October 17, 1998 in recognition of the longevity of her legacy to the poor and underserved families.

Mrs. Trice truly represents the noblest of my community. Having dedicated a major portion of her life to making the health care system work on behalf of the less fortunate in Miami-Dade, she was relentless in her development of innovative family health services program that responded to the crying needs of our community's poor. Hers was indeed a crusade of love and commitment that maximized understanding and compassion for countless destitute families who severely lack the financial wherewithal to have their health care move up through the labyrinth of the bureaucracy.

Under her leadership many lives have been saved and countless families have been rendered whole because of her dedication to create accessibility to affordable health care services. She was virtually the lone voice in the wilderness in exposing her righteous indignation over the hopelessness of countless individuals who through the various crises of poverty rendered them helpless before obtaining affordable quality health care.

Furthermore, she has been forthright and forceful in advocating the early recognition of the problems of HIV disease which causes AIDS. Under her tutelage the Family Health Center initiated the first screening and testing programs in the community and initiated organized educational programs for its patients long before the crisis was recognized and federal, state and local funding became available. Her sensitivity toward those who came to the Center for counseling knew no bounds, and she was likewise untiring in seeking the appropriate health care guidance for them.

In a September 3, 1998 Miami Times write-up, Mrs. Trice was genuinely lauded as a health care provider par excellence who "... has shown courageous leadership, insisting that high quality services must be provided in the community and be developed with constant community input and collaboration."

The consecration of her life serves as an example of how much difference a committed crusader can truly make in behalf of the less fortunate. Almost singlehandedly she has championed a career-long commitment to affordable quality health care services to poor families for nearly two decades.