

and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. FEINGOLD, Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. GREGG, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. CLELAND, and Mr. DODD):

S. 2514. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify State and local authority to regulate the placement, construction, and modification of broadcast transmission and telecommunications facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. REID:

S. 2515. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the amount of Social Security benefits exempt from tax for single taxpayers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2516. A bill to make improvements in the operation and administration of the Federal courts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRAMS:

S. 2517. A bill to amend the Federal Crop Insurance Act to establish a pilot program commencing in crop year 2000 for a period of 2 years in certain States to provide improved crop insurance options for producers; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. MOYNIHAN:

S. 2518. A bill to enhance family life; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. BURNS):

S. 2519. A bill to promote and enhance public safety through use of 9-1-1 as the universal emergency assistance number, further deployment of wireless 9-1-1 service, support of States in upgrading 9-1-1 capabilities and related functions, encouragement of construction and operation of seamless, ubiquitous and reliable networks for personal wireless services, and ensuring access to Federal Government property for such networks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. JOHNSON:

S. Res. 282. A resolution to express the sense of the Senate regarding social security and the budget surplus; to the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mrs. HUTCHINSON, Mr. FEINGOLD, Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. GREGG, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. CLELAND, and Mr. DODD):

S. 2514. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify State and local authority to regulate the placement, construction, and modification of broadcast transmission and telecommunications facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS LEGISLATION

• Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased to continue my strong objections to proposed Federal Communications Commission rules that could rob states and communities of the authority to decide where unsightly telecommunications towers should be built.

I am one of five Senators who voted against the Telecommunications Act of 1996. One of my fears was that the will and voice of states and local communities would be muzzled if that bill became law. Unfortunately, with the passage and implementation of the Telecommunications Act, my fears have been confirmed.

Mayors and citizens in Vermont towns and in towns across this nation are outraged that they have little control over the construction of these towers. This is especially troubling when communications technology is advancing so rapidly that large towers may become obsolete.

For example, some wireless phone providers offer the older analog wireless service. That is now being replaced by digital phone service in many parts of the nation. Analog providers could provide towerless service to towns by using an array of small antennas, instead of a large tower. Phone companies prefer to build one large tower with its switching equipment because that is cheaper than the switching equipment needed to control an array of small antennas. However, if a town does not want its landscape ruined with a tower, I think the company should be required to offer service through these smaller antennas.

Second, for companies offering the "newer" digital wireless phone service, other technologies are eliminating the need for large towers. The Iridium Corporation will offer phone service throughout the United States in the near future that is based on more than 60 low-earth-orbit satellites. Over time, this will provide a satellite communications link from any place in the world, even where no tower-based system is available.

In areas of the United States outside the range of cellular coverage the Iridium phone will connect you directly to the Iridium satellite network. Emergency communications—911 and disaster assistance—will be greatly aided with this development.

Hospitals, ambulances and other emergency service providers will be linked together by satellite directly from a hand held phone.

The Wall Street Journal reports that this service will cost more than regular cell phone service. However, they also report that other competitors and more efficiencies of scale are likely to bring down costs over time.

In addition, I have previously discussed how the towerless PCS-Over-Cable technology provides digital cellular phone service by using small antennas rather than large towers. These small antennas can be quickly at-

tached to existing telephone poles, lamp posts or buildings and can provide quality wireless phone service without the use of towers. This technology is cheaper than most tower technology in part because the PCS-Over-Cable wireless provider does not have to purchase land to erect large towers.

Since there are viable and reasonable alternatives to providing wireless phone service through the use of towers, I think that towns should have some say in this matter. And I think that mayors, town officials and local citizens will agree with me.

Why should a large tower be forced on a town when wireless phone service can be provided without using a tower? Indeed, many argue that towerless phone service is much better in a disaster situation. During New England's ice storm, I am told that some towers collapsed. Tornadoes, earthquakes or hurricanes can destroy large telephone towers. But satellite phone service would not be affected by these disasters. Also, the PCS-Over-Cable technology is much less likely to be out of service for large areas during a disaster as compared to wireless phone service provided by large towers.

In addition, other advances in communications technology may also make towers obsolete even faster than anticipated.

This is one reason why I am so concerned about the federal government taking away the power of local communities to control where these towers are located. When big, unsightly towers are proposed to be located in the wrong place, towns should be able to just say no. And if the rules proposed by the FCC are implemented, towns will be further marginalized and even lose their input as to where the towers are placed.

As I have said before, I do not want Vermont turned into a pincushion, with 200 foot towers indiscriminately sprouting up on every mountain and in every valley. I have heard from many Vermonters, as well as town leaders and citizens from across the country, who are justifiably afraid that they are losing control over the siting, design, and construction of telecommunications towers and related facilities. They feel that state and local concerns are being sacrificed to the interests of a small part of the telecommunications industry that uses large towers.

Today I continue in my commitment to the preservation of state and local authority. I am joined by Senators JEFFORDS, HUTCHINSON, MOYNIHAN, FEINGOLD, GREGG, MOSELEY-BRAUN, SARBANES, DODD, and CLELAND in introducing legislation which would repeal the authority of the FCC to preempt state and local regulations affecting the placement of new telecommunications towers. This legislation expands and improves upon S. 1350, which I introduced one year ago.

Vermont communities and the state of Vermont must have a role in deciding where towers are going to go. They