

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE SATELLITE HOME VIEWERS ACT

HON. RICK HILL

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. HILL of Montana. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to thank you for allowing me to take a moment to discuss an issue that is very near and dear to many Montanans hearts—their satellite service. Many Montanans and others in rural America have been contacting us regarding the dispute over distant network satellite service between local broadcasters and satellite providers. I share the concerns that many Montanans may be left without network signals if we do not take appropriate action.

In a state as large as Montana, there are many areas that cannot receive a decent broadcast signal of local television stations. For many, the only recourse is to invest in satellite equipment and programming packages in order to receive television programming. Recently, the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida (Case No. 96-3650-CIV-NESBITT) issued a preliminary injunction that requires the termination of network satellite service to over one million subscribers across the United States that fall within the "Grade B" contour.

The Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association stated that the Satellite Home Viewer Act (SHVA) provides that Americans who cannot receive an acceptable signal over-the-air from their local network affiliate are classified as "unserved household" and are therefore, eligible to receive network service via satellite. An "unserved household" is one that cannot receive a television signal of "Grade B" intensity (as defined by the FCC). Grade B is a technical measurement used by the FCC to determine predictive signal distribution for tower placement for the broadcasters.

Because the SHVA does not provide clear guidance on which households may lawfully receive network signals by satellite, and no straightforward testing mechanism exists to ascertain which households are "served," there is confusion in the marketplace. Unfortunately, this leaves millions of consumers caught in the middle. Local broadcasters in Montana have assured me of their willingness to work with Montanans who are determined to be "served households" by the FCC, but do not actually receive a quality broadcast signal by individually testing service and issuing waivers to allow them to continue receiving network signals via satellite. And they will be trying to get a waiver to seek a waiver from his or her local television broadcaster, and provided certain criteria are met, may ensure the continued delivery of network programming service via satellite. I have urged many Montanans who do not receive a signal to contact their individual broadcast stations for a waiver. I have heard from many Montanans that some local broadcasters have been will-

ing to work with them, and unfortunately some haven't.

However, there are some cases that there is a unfair burden on the local broadcasters for them to go to every household to prove if they receive a signal. But we must take action to correct this very concerning problem.

I appreciate that the Subcommittee Chairman, Mr. BILLY TAUZIN, has focused his efforts to come up with a legislative fix to address this matter. On February 25th, Representative TAUZIN introduced the Save our Satellites Act (H.R. 851) that seeks to save network television signals for consumers who will unfairly lose access to satellite-delivered network programming. I am an original cosponsor of this legislation and fully support its passage.

The Save our Satellites Act preserves the status quo for 90 days so that a more reliable method of determining who is eligible to receive network programming can be implemented. This is a good first step toward defusing this emergency situation for rural satellite consumers. I look forward to working with Mr. TAUZIN and other Members of Congress to find common sense solutions to this very important issue.

H.R. 474—FEDERAL CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTING

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, recently, I introduced legislation, H.R. 474, to help local contractors compete for military construction projects. The purpose of H.R. 474 is to address concerns raised by various unions, contractors, and the State of Hawaii, that local companies are not getting a fair shot at competing for military construction contracts. The ability of out-of-state contractors to ignore state tax and employment laws have allowed them to avoid costs that local companies have to meet and thereby outbid our local companies.

The problem of out of state contractors dodging state tax and employment laws was documented at the Congressional hearing I held on August 5, 1995, in Hawaii. H.R. 474 incorporates many of the suggestions and proposals made at this hearing on ways to make the bidding process more equitable for local companies.

H.R. 474 requires contractors to obtain a state tax clearance in order to be an eligible bidder on military construction projects; it requires them to obtain a state tax clearance and certify compliance with state employment laws in order to receive the final project payment; allows a military agency to withhold payment in order to meet state tax obligations; and it requires a contractor that has won a bid to obtain a state license in the state in which the work is to be performed, if that state requires such a license.

Military construction work is an important part of Hawaii's economy. Not only will Hawaii's local companies benefit from this legislation, but all local companies across the nation will have a fair chance to compete for these projects that are worth millions of dollars.

By joining me in supporting H.R. 474 we can provide the enforcement needed to make sure all bidders play by the same rules. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

CONGRATULATING COMMON THREADS AWARD WINNERS

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in congratulate Muriel Smittcamp, Violet Jensen, Geneva Shannon, Jane Logoluso, and Mildred "Micki" Parker, the recipients of the Common Threads Award. This award is presented to women in agriculture who have made a remarkable contribution to their community through volunteer work and philanthropy.

Muriel Smittcamp, of Clovis, CA, began her career in agriculture, together with her husband Earl, in 1945, with the purchase of 200 acres. She has volunteered her time with many organizations including the Rancho Guild of Valley Children's Hospital (V.C.H.), the Holiday Guild, and the Fresno State Bulldog Foundation. Muriel is also a California State University, Fresno Alumni member, contributor and worker, and donates her services to the Clovis Library, the American Cancer Society and 4-H.

Violet Jensen, of Fresno, CA, became a farmer's wife when she married Oliver Jensen in 1948. She has actively participated in all phases of farm management including tractor driving, tying vines and harvesting crops. She has been a member of the Farm Bureau for 50 years during which she has held several committee chairs. Violet has been active in Raisin Wives, La Tienda Guild for V.C.H. and Twilight Haven. She was very active with the Raisin Queen Pageant and the Farm Bureau Princess Pageant.

Jane Logoluso Bautista, of Madera, CA, joined her father's farming operation in 1992. Prior to that she had a 20 year career in the health care industry. She is currently responsible for government relations, personnel, labor relations and special projects. Jane is vice-chair of the California Apple Commission, trustee for U.S. Apple Association and is secretary of the Nisei Farmers' League. She volunteers for the American Cancer Society and has served on the Kingsview Mental Health Corp.

Geneva Shannon, of Visalia, CA, grew up on a farm in Waukena, Ca. She married Eric Shannon in 1980, and together they continued their farming interests. She was involved in 4-

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H and Future Farmers of America in school, and continues to support these organizations. Geneva served as president of the Tulare Kings Chapter of California Women for Agriculture, and also on the State Board. She is active in the Farm Bureau, and represents agriculture in the classroom.

Mildred "Micki" Parker, of LeGrand, CA, taught at both Chowchilla and Merced High Schools. She was a sponsor of the American Field Service and advisor to Future Business Leaders of America. She and her husband Richard farmed almonds for many years. After her retirement from teaching, she actively participated in day-to-day farm operations. Micki has been active in the Merced area with the County Area Agency of Aging, Community Action Board, Women's Club and Farm Bureau. She is also a member of the Merced Chapter of California Women for Agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Common Threads Award winners. These women have shown outstanding involvement, not only in agriculture, but in strengthening their respective communities. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing these honorees a bright future and continued success.

CELEBRATING OUR AMERICAN
HEROES

HON. STEVEN T. KUYKENDALL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, like many of my colleagues, I spent the recent district work period participating in celebratory events for African American History Month. I saluted the heroism of Eric Davis on the baseball diamond and in his fight against colon cancer, John Bryant of Operation Hope—our first non-profit investment banking organization, and Vernon J. Baker, a Purple Heart, Medal of Honor, and Bronze Star recipient for acts of valor in World War II.

Let me tell you a little about Vernon. Second Lieutenant Baker served in the Army and fought in World War II. On April 5–6, 1945, Second Lieutenant Baker destroyed enemy installations, personnel and equipment during his company's attack against a strongly entrenched enemy in mountainous terrain. When his company was stopped by the concentrated fire from several machine-gun emplacements, he crawled to one position and destroyed it, killing three German soldiers. Continuing forward, he attacked an enemy observation post and killed its two occupants. With the aid of one of his men, Second Lieutenant Baker attacked two more machine-gun nests, killing or wounding the four enemy soldiers occupying these positions. He then covered the evacuation of the wounded personnel of his company by occupying an exposed position and drawing enemy fire. On the following night, Second Lieutenant Baker voluntarily led a battalion advance through enemy mine fields and heavy fire toward the division objective.

Like Vernon, African Americans have played an integral role in defending American ideals since this country's origin. Their willingness to serve this country dates back to the Revolutionary War and their service as "privateers" in America's first merchant marine. They fought in the Battle of Concord, crossed the

Delaware River, and served in the Continental Army. Thousands served in the War of 1812, protected New Orleans when threatened in 1815, and fought with the Party of Lincoln to achieve emancipation. Almost 400,000 African Americans fought alongside white infantrymen in World War I, though they had to do so in segregated units and in the face of widespread misinformation that African Americans lacked the intellectual ability to serve their country. Today, almost 25% of our armed forces are African American.

We seldom hear of the acts of individual courage displayed by our African American vets. Yet, the simple act of signing up to serve—and facing bigotry, discrimination, and segregation head on—is at least as heroic as the act of serving this country. Even today, though, our history books lack real substance about the full contributions of soldiers like Vernon Baker to our military legacy. Recognizing their contribution, even if it takes African American History Month to prompt us, is the first step we must take.

Ultimately, the contribution of men like Vernon Baker should be remembered not as the contribution of an African American, but as the contribution of an American soldier. To quote Interior Secretary Harold Ickes, "Not color, not race, not religion, not pedigree of family, nor place of birth, not social standing, not size of his bank account, not his trade, nor her profession" makes one an American. "An American is one who loves justice and has a deep and abiding respect for the dignity of men and women. An American will fight for his freedom and that of his neighbor. An American will forgo ease and property and security in order to preserve for himself and for his children the rights of free men and women."

I proudly salute Vernon Baker, as well as Eric Davis and John Bryant, for their fight to preserve for all the rights of free men and women. I salute each, not because he or she is an African American, but because they are Americans, fighting for collective ideals and to make the world safe for all of us.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained during rollcall vote 31. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE
NADLER SOCIAL SECURITY BILL

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I am here today because, as the ongoing national dialogue at tests, the Social Security system is at a crossroads. The decisions we make this Congress will have aftershocks that will be felt well into the second half of the 21st century. Concern for our children and our children's children demand that those decisions be made carefully, seriously, and compassionately—keeping in mind Social Security's historic commitments.

Today, I am announcing the introduction of a comprehensive Social Security plan that will preserve the system while staying consistent with certain key values that have always provided the heart and soul of the nation's most popular social program: this plan does not raise the retirement age, it does not cut benefits, it does not raise tax rates, and it does not shift the risk onto individuals through individual private accounts funded by FICA taxes.

These are not academic considerations. They are the guiding principles of a program that has risen literally millions of human beings out of the wrenching grip of poverty—poverty that for so long was too often synonymous with old age or disability. For over half a century, they have been part of what defines Americans as a people.

President Clinton has already put forth an excellent framework to strengthen Social Security and Medicare and increase private savings, which keeps the system solvent until 2055. My plan builds on this firm foundation, but takes an extra step to completely eliminate the projected 2.19% actuarial deficit. According to the Social Security Actuaries, my plan brings the Social Security System into long-term actuarial balance for the foreseeable future—at least 75 years.

Briefly, here's how we do it. My plan implements the President's proposal to authorize the transfer of 62% of the projected budget surplus to the Social Security Trust Fund for a period of 15 years. It creates an Independent Social Security Investment Oversight Board that is authorized to hire private managers to invest a higher, though still prudent, portion of the Social Security surplus into index funds. And it increases—and then indexes—the cap on taxable wages, without removing the cap altogether. Currently, 93% of wage earners earn less than the cap, and will be totally unaffected. Under current law, less than 85% of all wages is subject to FICA contributions; this has slipped in recent years from the historic 90% due to the dramatic rise in disparity of wages. Raising the cap will restore the historic level, while affecting only the richest 7% of the population.

These steps will ensure the solvency of Social Security for at least 75 years, while ensuring the guaranteed benefits Social Security provides to seniors, individuals with disabilities, widows, widowers, and children. And—I can not say this often enough—it does so without raising the retirement age, without cutting benefits, without raising tax rates, and without shifting the risk onto the backs of individuals. This is meaningful, responsible legislation, and I intend to do my best to make sure my colleagues give it the hearing it deserves.

H.R. 475, MILITARY SPOUSES

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, recently I introduced H.R. 475, extending eligibility to use the military health care system and commissary stores to un-remarried former spouses of a member of the uniformed services in certain circumstances.

Current law provides health and commissary benefits to un-remarried former spouses who