H.R. 3261 does not limit the ability of non-U.S. signatories of INTELSAT to provide direct access in the United States. Thus the sections of H.R. 1872 dealing with signatory fees and foreign signatories, along with section 641(1)(A)(iii) regarding carrier pass through of savings realized as a result of direct access, were deleted.

H.R. 3261 does not grant the Commission authority to impose a signatory fee or limit direct access by foreign signatories nor should the statement indicating that the Commission has authority to implement direct access be interpreted as meaning that the Commission has the authority to impose a signatory fee or limit direct access by foreign signatories.

New section 641 also does not direct the Commission to take action on COMSAT's petition to be treated as a non-dominant common carrier because the FCC already has acted on this petition. Furthermore, section 641(4), stating that direct access regulation would be eliminated after a pro-competitive privatization of INTELSAT or Inmarsat is achieved was unnecessary and thus was deleted.

H.R. 3261 does not include an equivalent of section 642 of H.R. 1872 dealing with the renegotiation of monopoly contracts, which is also known as “fresh look.” The sections of H.R. 3261 following section 641 were renumbered to reflect the deletion of old section 642.

New section 649 is intended to prevent U.S.-licensed international carriers and satellite operators from gaining access to those foreign carriers. The effect of Section 649 is to apply this policy to all foreign satellite operators wishing to do business in the United States. Exclusive market access is a critical barrier to the provision of competitive satellite services by United States companies.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

CONGRATULATING SOUTH GRAND PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL

HON. MARTIN FROST
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, November 17, 1999

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate South Grand Prairie High School for winning one of 13 New American High School awards from the Department of Education. This designation recognizes South Grand Prairie's tremendous efforts in raising academic standards and student achievement.

South Grand Prairie is a diverse high school of over 2,400 students. It reflects the changing demographics of the surrounding community, half of the student body comes from minority backgrounds. In 1996, South Grand Prairie undertook an extensive reform program to raise academic performance by the school's "middle majority." The large segment of the student body whose needs were not entirely being met. The high school created a full-academy model that incorporates Advanced Placement-level curricula with career-oriented programs.

Students at South Grand Prairie pursue a rigorous academic program in an area that best suits them—Business and Computer Technology, Creative and Performing Arts, Health Science and Human Services, Humanities or Law, and Math, Science and Engineering. This allows students to raise their performance by capitalizing on their interests.

South Grand Prairie has enlisted the entire community in this effort. They have formed partnerships with local businesses and area colleges. An Academic Advisory Board comprised of students, teachers, and prominent local business and industry leaders, has been formed to develop a curriculum and assessments of the program. And the Chamber of Commerce has created a mock shadowing program which allows educators to understand the skills needed in the vocational areas in which they are teaching.

The results of this innovative program have been remarkable. South Grand Prairie has raised its students passage rate on Texas’ state math exam by 18 percent. South Grand Prairie students pass the state's reading test at a 24 percent higher rate than the state average, and the school has higher SAT scores and rates of college enrollment than the state average.

Clearly, South Grand Prairie’s academic reforms have been a success, the school is highly deserving of the New American High School award. If South Grand Prairie represents the future in American education, the future looks bright indications to Principal Roy Garcia and all of South Grand Prairie’s students, faculty, and parents. Your school is a model for all of America’s high schools and you have made North Texas proud. I am pleased to be able to join South Grand Prairie officials at their White House award ceremony this Friday.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 5TH ANNUAL COVENANT HOUSE WASHINGTON CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, November 17, 1999

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Covenant House Candlelight Vigil, where I will speak on Tuesday, December 4, 1999. The Vigil is a national event held every year in early December in some 20 cities across the country. The Candlelight Vigil symbolizes community hope for the well being of all our children and highlights the plight of homeless, runaway, and at-risk children.

The Vigil in Washington alone has 3,000 concerned adults and youth marching, bearing candles and flashlights in support of youth. They will march shoulder to shoulder for a quarter of a mile to the Covenant House Washington Community Services Center, setting a tone of joy, solidarity, commitment, and hope. Similar rallies are held simultaneously at Covenant House sites across the country.

Since its inception in 1995, Covenant House Washington has invested over $13 million of private funding in our youth. They have given hundreds of youth a hand up by providing food, shelter, tutoring, life skills, job training, legal representation, and positive recreational opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring Covenant House Washington and their commitment to our most vulnerable young people and in recognizing the 1999 Covenant House Washington Candlelight Vigil.