

allow companies to own three television stations in some markets and would do away with a 28-year ban on companies owning both a newspaper and a TV station in the same market.

What is perhaps more egregious is the secretive process through which these changes have been considered. The FCC tried to keep the plan's details secret and refused to have more than one, barely publicized hearing on the issue. FCC Chairman Michael Powell has rejected requests from two of his own commission members to delay the vote for more public comment.

Fortunately, even though this issue got relatively little media coverage, the American public has taken action. Progressive and conservative interest groups, artists and 200 communications academics have protested the new rules. Of the 9,000 e-mails the FCC has received on the issue, only 11 supported relaxing the rules. I, along with 100 of my colleagues in Congress, recently wrote to Chairman Powell expressing our opposition to the proposed rules. Unfortunately, the FCC is not listening.

Owners of media outlets are obliged to serve the public interest—not just their own financial interests. Our Founding Fathers created this democracy to give us the right to debate ideas openly and make informed choices. If these changes go into effect, a few huge, powerful corporations could gobble up even more media outlets to control most of the news we get.

Be grateful that today you had the opportunity to read about these proposed changes, supported by the powerful media conglomerates. If they have their way, the next time the FCC decides to change the rules, you may not be informed at all.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Madam Speaker, I want to take a minute to discuss an issue that is very important to many men and women in my district and to the men and women working in the telecommunications industry.

The FCC is preparing for a release of their Triennial Review of the UNE-P and I want to weigh in with my colleagues as to the fundamentals of how the UNE-P pricing model works, or as I see it, doesn't work.

Suppose you, an entrepreneur, go in to manufacture candy bars and you invest significant capital to create this wonderful factory and generate candy bars. You operate for 30 years, during which you must buy new equipment, and maintain that equipment. The bottom line of your costs is say, \$.75. You determine to sell them in the retail market for \$1. Then you discover that there is a regulatory body empowered by the Congress that regulates candy bars and one of their missions is to promote competition. One day, these regulators come to you and they say, "You know what? We think since you're the largest candy bar manufacturer, you should have a competitor. And we have someone that we want to be your competitor." Then the regulators tell you one way in which they've determined to promote competition is for you to allow this competitor to sell your product from your machinery and buildings at \$.75 or in some cases less than \$.75, so they in turn can resell it in the market for a profit to them, and a loss to your company.

All the money you just spent to build a building which stores the machinery you use to make your product, package your product, distribute you're product, and maintain all of this, is used to provide a product to your competitor for the same price or less of a price that is costs you, only they don't have any risk.

I pose the question to the regulators and my colleagues. What would you do as CEO of this candy bar company, what do you feel is the right thing to do? I see it to be wrong and think the regulators should take steps to mitigate this wrong or change it while they still have a chance.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SANDERS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order this evening.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. HARRIS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Vermont? There was no objection.

□ 2215

PRESERVING AND PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, it is interesting to review the ebb and flow of the political tides, as we have had here this evening, where we here on Capitol Hill deal with the ebb and flow of various political crises, whether it is the struggle against global terrorism, whether it is the battle of the economy, budgets and tax cuts, where the economy is hopefully a short-term problem, where the perversion of tax and budget priorities hopefully is temporary in nature, and it is, after all, within our power to change priorities to adjust tax rates and make infrastructure investments.

There is, Madam Speaker, however, a greater battle, and one over which, if we are not careful, we may not be able to exercise such control. I am speaking, of course, of the struggle to preserve and protect our environment, because we are watching the slow, relentless poisoning of air and water, the destruction of habitat, which puts millions of people at risk on a daily basis and inflicts permanent damage.

The World Health Organization, for example, suggests that water-borne diseases kill at least 3.5 million people every year. That is more than three times as many people who were lost in the World Trade Center, who die every day, 365 days a year. It is within our power, our capacity, to do something about it.

It was my privilege to be in South Africa last fall as the world came together, the largest United Nations conference in history, making commitments to what we were going to do to try and make changes like that to protect the environment. I watched as the United States joined with over 104 other heads of state, 194 countries in all, to make commitments, for instance, that over 1 million people who

do not have access to clean drinking water, we would cut that amount in half in the next 15 years.

I think a number of people felt uncomfortable with that, thinking about how many people would be sentenced to unnecessary death and disease, but it was an important goal. But that goal suggests that we are going to provide, even that modest goal, 211,000 people per day, clean drinking water who do not have it, in order to reach that 15-year goal of just cutting it in half. It is an example of these threats that we face to the environment.

I would like to reflect for a few moments this evening about what we are doing dealing with these two great global threats.

We have focused our attention on the greater environment in terms of the atmosphere and our oceans. Fifty years ago space was our proxy in a struggle against communism. Ten years later, we had the Stratton Commission, ushering in a new era for the space under our oceans' surfaces. We have spent billions of dollars trying to penetrate deep space, a somewhat lesser amount dealing with our oceans, while we as a planet continue to affect weather patterns, affect global climate change, global warming and disease.

Madam Speaker, I think it is important for us to be able to focus on what we can do to make a difference in those areas.

I have often on this floor dealt with issues dealing with global warming. The scientific consensus is agreed to, although it is slow in dawning on Members of Congress, and our policies do not yet reflect it. But when you deal with objective members of science, 15 years ago what was a debatable proposition that we were affecting the Earth's climate in cataclysmic ways, now the vast scientific consensus, including the commission that wrote the report from the National Academy of Sciences 2 years ago requested by President Bush, confirms that we now know that global warming and this climate change is a reality; that it is, in all likelihood, a world where our children will inherit a Glacier National Park with no glaciers, indeed, no glaciers at all in the continental United States.

The sudden occurrence of open water at the North Pole for the first time in recorded history is now being followed by evidence of rapid melting of the polar areas, and we face consequences like the extinction of polar bears within our children's lifetime.

But the problems are not just with trophy species and signature landmarks like mountain glaciers. We are changing the envelope, as Professor Holden, Director of the Program on Science and Technology and Public Policy at Harvard University, expresses it, the envelope in which all other environmental conditions and processes operate.

It will be impacting the productivity of our farms, our forests and fisheries,