

the Commission to review its rules so that the frequencies requested may be awarded to the Authority on a temporary basis.

Such a Commission decision is not unprecedented and occurred, for example, when the Commission granted a waiver to allow New York City area public safety agencies to use vacant UHF television channel 16 for land mobile operations. Granting a similar waiver and assigning additional frequencies would be invaluable to the Authority as it meets its obligations to protect the public safety.

In response, and clearly misunderstanding my reference to the New York City precedent, the Commission replied that the Authority had not requested the use of vacant UHF television channels.

The State of New Hampshire has had a similar request pending before the Commission for more than three years. The State wants to construct and operate a new statewide mobile radio system to serve the public safety needs of its citizens. The petition was denied in May, 1996, the Commission saying that these needs would be addressed in a yet-to-be-issued rulemaking concerning public safety spectrum needs through the year 2010.

Also weighing-in on this matter, and underscoring the importance to law enforcement nationwide, then-Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick wrote to the Commission in support of South Bay's application. In her August, 1996 letter, Ms. Gorelick reiterated that from law enforcement's perspective the Commission's "solution" to increase spectrum availability is still several years away. "In the meantime, law enforcement and public safety agencies in densely populated areas such as that served by South Bay are being faced with immediate and very real problem of insufficient spectrum."

This should be a simple issue for the Commission. Under the policies outlined in its February 9, 1995 report on "Meeting State and Local Agency Spectrum Needs Through the Year 2010," the FCC said that one of its policies is to handle critical public safety spectrum requirements on a case-by-case basis, including allowing the use of non-public safety frequencies where necessary. This seems to me to be a reasonable, common sense policy. The policy, however, has been implemented only in one recent instance involving a New York City request and, more recently, the FCC Wireless Bureau denied two similar requests, which are the basis of this legislation. This inconsistency raises questions about the adequacy of the FCC's existing policy and whether it is being applied in a fair and evenhanded manner.

Complicating this matter further is the Commission's just-announced plans for the transitioning to digital television and the reallocation for public safety use of 24 MHz of spectrum—4 existing unused TV channels—in the lightly used Channel 60-to-69 range. Unfortunately, because of the understandable need to accommodate all existing Los Angeles area television stations, it now appears that the plan will not work in Los Angeles and that no channels in the 60-to-69 range will be available for public safety use. This makes the full implementation of the Commission's Policy Statement even more important. As the most spectrum-congested region in the country, the Commission must be in a position to use whatever tools are available to make vacant spectrum available to meet public safety needs in Los Angeles.

If there was ever a circumstance warranting application of Policy Statement's preference for case-by-case waivers, this is that circumstance. But both the New Hampshire and South Bay decisions by the Wireless Bureau seem to be premised on a contrary policy of handling spectrum use matters only through general allocation proceedings.

Let me quote from the decision "In the Matter of License Communications Services, Inc. and South Bay Regional Public Communications Authority" in which the FCC said that "rather than undermine our existing allocations framework by permitting ad hoc private use of commercial spectrum, we believe the public interest is better served by increasing frequency availability through the rulemaking process."

In the same order the FCC said "the creation of additional 470–512 MHz frequencies by the Commission's actions in our 'refarming' proceeding will benefit part 90 licensees, such as South Bay, that seek additional frequencies for system expansion. We, therefore, are denying the South Bay Petition for Waiver."

Last, let me also quote from a May 1996 letter to me in which the FCC said "South Bay will have increased opportunities to expand channel capacity within existing frequency allocation as a result of our 'refarming' proceeding."

The Commission can't have it both ways. How can it square these inconsistent policy statements? How long do public safety agencies have to wait before the FCC makes up its mind as to which policy should prevail? Why can't the Commission grant operating authority, even interim authority, for the frequencies requested by South Bay Regional Communication Authority and the State of New Hampshire?

Mr. Speaker, the answer to these questions may be months, even years, away. Consequently, there is a need for the bill Mr. DIXON and I are introducing today. Emergency broadcasters in southern California and New Hampshire, and the public, have waited long enough.

SEEKING A JUST AND PEACEFUL RESOLUTION IN CYPRUS

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, the Cyprus problem has been a matter of concern to the U.S. Congress now in excess of twenty-two years. It is a situation that cries out for just redress and an end to the occupation of Cyprus by foreign troops. Although the world has dramatically changed for the better during this decade, Cyprus remains as a pressing international problem. Indeed Cyprus has almost become a codeword for intractability in the realm of diplomacy.

I have been encouraged, nevertheless, by recent statements from high level officials of the Clinton Administration, including the President himself, that indicate that there may be new willingness on the part of our government to exert its leadership in promoting a solution to the Cyprus problem. I strongly believe that our government should invest some of our prestige in such an effort, because Americans

have always supported justice, and because we have significant interests that can be affected by instability in Cyprus.

Over the past year there have been a number of events and incidents that have increased tensions in Cyprus and in the Eastern Mediterranean region. There is a disturbing trend of increased militarization of the island, already one of the most highly militarized parts of the globe. There are, however, also positive developments that could act to catalyze a peaceful and just solution. One of these is the pending negotiation on Cyprus' accession to the European Union that may begin by the end of the year. There has been increased diplomatic activity in Europe and in the U.N. to bring the two sides together.

The Resolution I am introducing today points out the interests and developments regarding the Cyprus situation and urges the President to keep his pledge to give increased attention to Cyprus. I am pleased to be joined by a group of distinguished cosponsors, including Mr. HAMILTON, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. PORTER, Mr. ENGEL, and Mrs. MALONEY, that have shared an interest in Cyprus and the concern over what may arise from a continued stalemate on the island. It is our hope that this resolution will help spur the resolve of the Clinton Administration to indeed make 1997 the Year of Cyprus.

Mr. Speaker, I request that a full text of H. Con. Res. 81 be inserted at this point in the record.

H. CON. RES. 81

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Calling for a United States initiative seeking a just and peaceful resolution of the situation on Cyprus.

Whereas the Republic of Cyprus has been divided and occupied by foreign forces since 1974 in violation of United Nations resolutions;

Whereas the international community, the Congress, and United States administrations have called for an end to the status quo on Cyprus, considering that it perpetuates an unacceptable violation of international law and fundamental human rights affecting all the people of Cyprus, and undermines significant United States interests in the Eastern Mediterranean region;

Whereas the international community and the United States Government have repeatedly called for the speedy withdrawal of all foreign forces from the territory of Cyprus;

Whereas there are internationally acceptable means to resolve the situation in Cyprus, including the demilitarization of Cyprus and the establishment of a multinational force to ensure the security of both communities in Cyprus;

Whereas the House of Representatives has endorsed the objective of the total demilitarization of Cyprus;

Whereas during the past year tensions on Cyprus have dramatically increased, with violent incidents occurring along ceasefire lines at a level not reached since 1974;

Whereas recent events in Cyprus have heightened the potential for armed conflict in the region involving two North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, Greece and Turkey, which would threaten vital United States interests in the already volatile Eastern Mediterranean area and beyond;

Whereas a peaceful, just, and lasting solution to the Cyprus problem would greatly benefit the security, and the political, economic, and social well-being of all Cypriots, as well as contribute to improved relations between Greece and Turkey;

Whereas a lasting solution to the Cyprus problem would also strengthen peace and stability in the Eastern Mediterranean and serve important interests of the United States;

Whereas the United Nations has repeatedly stated the parameters for such a solution, most recently in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1092, adopted on December 23, 1996, with United States support;

Whereas the prospect of the accession by Cyprus to the European Union, which the United States has actively supported, could serve as a catalyst for a solution to the Cyprus problem;

Whereas President Bill Clinton has pledged that in 1997 the United States will "play a heightened role in promoting a resolution in Cyprus"; and

Whereas United States leadership will be a crucial factor in achieving a solution to the Cyprus problem, and increased United States involvement in the search for this solution will contribute to a reduction of tensions on Cyprus: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) reaffirms its view that the status quo on Cyprus is unacceptable and detrimental to the interests of the United States in the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond;

(2) considers lasting peace and stability on Cyprus could be best secured by a process of complete demilitarization leading to the withdrawal of all foreign occupation forces, the cessation of foreign arms transfers to Cyprus, and providing for alternative internationally acceptable and effective security arrangements as negotiated by the parties;

(3) welcomes and supports the commitment by President Clinton to give increased attention to Cyprus and make the search for a solution a priority of United States foreign policy;

(4) encourages the President to launch an early substantive initiative, in close coordination with the United Nations, the European Union, and interested governments to promote a speedy resolution of the Cyprus problem on the basis of international law, the provisions of relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, democratic principles, including respect for human rights, and in accordance with the norms and requirements for accession to the European Union;

(5) calls upon the parties to lend their full support and cooperation to such an initiative; and

(6) requests the President to report actions taken to give effect to the objectives set forth in paragraph (4) in the bimonthly report on Cyprus transmitted to the Congress.

MILITARY HEALTH CARE CHOICE ACT

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 1997

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, today I will introduce the Military Health Care Choice Act of 1997. Under this bill, the families of our service men and women and military retirees and their families will be able to choose a health plan in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program in lieu of military health care.

This reform is necessary, Mr. Speaker, because for these individuals the military health care system is broken. In 1994, General Shalikashvili acknowledged this. He said the military health care system covering them is—and I quote—"headed toward a cliff."

Last year, the Civil Service Subcommittee, which I chair, held a hearing on improving access to health care for military families. We heard horror stories describing the problems the current military health care system has caused military families. One witness was the wife of an Air Force Master Sergeant. When she became pregnant, she chose the hospital at Andrews Air Force Base to care for her and deliver her baby. But just 5 weeks before her due date, she was told that Andrews would no longer treat her or deliver her baby. There was a quota on deliveries at Andrews, and hers would be over the limit. She was left on her own to find doctors who were qualified under CHAMPUS and would accept CHAMPUS fees and to make arrangements for the delivery.

Another witness, the widow of a retired marine major, described the substandard care her husband had received under the system for military retirees. Her terminally ill husband was initially denied cancer medication because the VA hospital treating him said it would rather spend \$3,000 on aspirin for 3,000 men than on chemotherapy for one. When the witness herself needed surgery for possible breast cancer, she needed the permission of the military base near her home. The base said no, but provided no military alternative. She had the surgery done, but she and her husband had to foot the bill.

Mr. Speaker, the hearing record contains many more such examples. I urge my colleagues to read it.

Just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I learned of yet another atrocious example from a military retiree. For 3 years, his wife had been treated by a VA hospital for a series of debilitating brain tumors. Then, on a cold, wet, windy night, that hospital refused to treat her when she was seriously ill, and demanded that she go to an army hospital 12 miles away. The VA hospital refused to call an ambulance, and even threatened to have her and her husband arrested for trespassing when he resisted leaving. Her husband drove her the 12 miles to the Army hospital through a raging rain storm.

The Army hospital also refused to treat her, sending her back to the very VA hospital that had turned her away. She was then admitted to that hospital and spent 3 weeks in intensive care.

This retiree also points out that his copayments under the military health care systems can reach as high as \$7,500—pretty tough medicine on his \$13,000 annual income.

When we needed them, these individuals did not ration their devotion to duty and to the Nation. When they need us we must not ration their health care.

I urge Members to join me in making this benefit available to those whom we owe so much.

NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS' MEMORIAL DAY

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 1997

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate National Peace Officers' Memorial Day and pay tribute to our fallen brothers and sisters.

I would especially like to pay tribute to the seven officers in Georgia who made the ultimate sacrifice—giving their lives in the line of duty during the last year. Officers Dennis Cader, Richard Cash, Brett Dickey, George Hester, Victor Pimentel, Durwin Potts, and Scott Smith served their communities with courage and valor while protecting the women and men of Georgia.

Every day the law enforcement community stands on the front line ready to serve and protect you and me. It is only fitting that we pay tribute to them today. We in Congress should support all initiatives that take violent criminals and those who pose a threat off the street. Additionally, the American people should show support and respect for these brave frontline officers. All too often we take law enforcement officers and the job they do for granted. However, much of our peace of mind as we walk our streets is a direct result of the work they do to protect us. With this in mind, I strongly encourage more community law enforcement partnerships.

Officers from all across the country traveled to Washington, DC this week to celebrate National Police Week, which culminates with National Peace Officers' Memorial Day. Hundreds of law enforcement personnel and family members of the fallen officers stood on the west front of the Capitol today to bid a final farewell to their comrades who fell in the last year. They will also stand at the National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial tomorrow evening to participate in a candlelight vigil to honor and celebrate the lives of these brave officers.

We thank the families who stood and continue to stand by their loved ones while they put their lives on the line for us. Our prayers are with you and we join with you to celebrate their great work. Our Nation is greatly enriched by the contributions of these great men and women.

MY GOOD FRIEND, THE PRESIDENT OF TAIWAN

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 1997

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, a few years ago, I had the opportunity to visit Taiwan and I became an admirer of President Lee Teng-hui. He was graceful, charismatic, knowledgeable, and visionary as well. He deeply impressed me with his firm grasp of world events as he articulated his vision of a modern Taiwan that is economically prosperous, politically free and internationally respected.

President Lee has certainly maintained Taiwan's spectacular economic growth. Politically he has introduced many reforms, including the upcoming debate on Taiwan's constitution. In terms of achieving greater international recognition for Taiwan, I have learned that Foreign Minister John Chang is succeeding in making the world see the injustices of excluding Taiwan, a major economic power, from many important international organizations. As for Taiwan's relationship with the United States, Taiwan certainly has many friends on Capitol Hill due to the efforts of Ambassador Jason Hu and his staff.

Congratulations to my good friend, the President of Taiwan, on the occasion of his