

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation, which I authored; and I believe that the establishment of this Radio Free Afghanistan by Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty is essential for peace and essential for stability in the region. This approach is surrogate broadcasting operating as if Afghanistan had a free and vibrant press, which, unfortunately, it does not.

Now, I have been calling for Radio Free Afghanistan for several years now. I think it is fair to say that the previous administration had no interest in this type of aggressive broadcasting to Afghanistan. For 5 years, we have tried to introduce this concept. And now, finally, with the passage of this bill, the voices of freedom and democracy will fill the air in the region, offering an alternative to the hate radio that has been heard until now, because that hate radio is the methodology of Radio Shariat and other broadcasts; and it has had a very poisonous impact in Afghanistan.

I am convinced that if we had had Radio Free Afghanistan up and running for several years now, the terrorists would not have had the fertile ground they found in Afghanistan. The roots of democracy would have been established. They would not have been ripped out.

The concept behind Radio Free Afghanistan is to do what was done with Radio Free Europe in Poland and in Czechoslovakia and in other states. When we talk today with the leaders of Poland or the Czech Republic, they say that the hearts and minds of those people in those countries were turned by the opportunity to listen to free radio broadcasts from the West on a daily basis, which explained what was actually happening in their society. They were taught the concepts of tolerance, of democracy, and of political pluralism.

And, frankly, information is power. We have the opportunity to teach those same values with these radio broadcasts. We know in Eastern Europe these broadcasts were able to explain and put in context what they were hearing from the Soviet broadcasts, so that people had an alternative, so that people had a frame of reference and could judge the truth of those Soviet broadcasts. Well, that is what people need in Afghanistan and Pakistan today, a chance to judge the truthfulness of the Shariat broadcasts they have been hearing for the last 5 years.

Over time, we know from those leaders that we have talked to, that this was the most effective single thing that changed the attitudes of the average people in Eastern Europe. This legislation that we have today provides 8 hours of broadcasting a day, 4 in Pashtu, 4 in Dari, the two major dialects.

I believe that Afghanistan, for us in the United States, is at a critical point

in its history. And I say it is at a critical point because what media did exist there has been totally destroyed. The Taliban destroyed the wherewithal for people to communicate. Eighty-five percent of those people own radios, and it is an opportunity for them now to hear this message.

If the various factions in Afghanistan are going to be able to strike a longlasting governing accord, the free flow of accurate information will be critical. Otherwise, rumor and misinformation and hate broadcasts will kill that country's chance to develop stability. As I met with Afghanistan's interim leader, Chairman Karzai, the other week, he told me how excited he was about the impact these broadcasts are having on the country.

This legislation initially passed the House on November 7, 2001, by a near unanimous vote. It now returns to the House with an amendment from the other body. And although the Senate's amendment scales back the proposal slightly, I am happy to get this bill to the President's desk for his signature; and I look forward to working with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), who has done so much for public diplomacy, and with the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) to authorize Radio Free Afghanistan for fiscal year 2003 as well. That is something we need to do to build upon these crucial broadcasts.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

□ 1515

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE), the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking member, and I offer my appreciation to the author of this legislation, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), as well as the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN).

Before the end of the last session, I held a briefing on the treatment of children in Afghanistan. That issue may be different from what we are discussing today, but what I gleaned from that briefing and how children were being treated was also the desire for education, the desire to know a better life, the desire to be part of a better nation.

This legislation, Radio Free Afghanistan, now coming back from the Senate, is legislation that answers the question that we will not return to the previous behavior after the involvement with Russia where it was suggested that America did not stay to help build a nation. Now we can build from within by having a democratic tool, by having people listen to how a nation can be built. The interim government has said they want to ensure that they have a land that respects individuals, the rights of women, the

rights of children, the rights of families. Radio Free Afghanistan will be that vehicle to help them understand how they can structure their government.

We know now that President Musharraf is here in the United States from Pakistan, and we hope that this reach will also influence what is going on in his country, and the collective region will be in the business of ensuring that we have a nation that will stand up for the principles of a democratic economy and a democratic nation.

Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge the importance of this legislation. I am pursuing my interest in the treatment of Afghanistan children, but I do know if they have the tools to understand how they can better themselves as they grow and provide a nation based on democratic principles and principles of equality, we will have a friend in that region, along with many other friends.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) for his leadership. However we can move this legislation along for the President's desk, we will be better for it, and certainly the region will be a better place for all who live there.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2998.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 2998.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING
CRASH OF TRANSPORTE AEREO
MILITAR ECUATORIANO (TAME)
FLIGHT 120 ON JANUARY 28, 2002

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 313) expressing the sense of Congress regarding the crash of Transporte Aereo Militar Ecuatoriano (TAME) Flight 120 on January 28, 2002.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 313

Whereas Transporte Aereo Militar Ecuatoriano (TAME) Flight 120 was en route from Quito, Ecuador, to Tulcan, Ecuador, when it crashed in the Andes mountains in Colombia on January 28, 2002;

Whereas the crash tragically killed an estimated 92 people;

Whereas the United States has strong cultural and historic ties to Ecuador and Colombia;

Whereas the people of Ecuador and Colombia have already suffered greatly as a result of the crash in the same region of another Ecuadorian aircraft on January 17, 2002, which killed 26 people;

Whereas the civil aviation departments of Ecuador and Colombia are working in concert to facilitate the recovery and identification of the passengers and crew members of TAME Flight 120; and

Whereas professional emergency personnel from Ecuador and Colombia valiantly overcame treacherous terrain and inclement weather to reach the site of the crash and perform emergency services: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) sends its heartfelt condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones of the victims of the crash of Transporte Aereo Militar Ecuatoriano (TAME) Flight 120 on January 28, 2002; and

(2) commends the professional emergency personnel from Ecuador and Colombia who responded to the tragic crash of TAME Flight 120 with courage, determination, and skill.

SEC. 2. The Clerk of the House of Representatives shall transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to the President of Ecuador and to the President of Colombia.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 313, the concurrent resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this resolution is to express the sense of Congress regarding the crash of an Ecuadorian airliner, TAME flight 120, that happened on January 28. It was en route from Quito, Ecuador, to Cali, Colombia, via Tulcan, Ecuador.

That morning farmers reported hearing a plane flying through thick cloud cover, and then a huge explosion. TAME flight 120 crashed into the slopes of a glacier-capped volcano in southern Colombia. The plane was destroyed on impact. Ninety-two people perished, including seven children and nine crew members.

Rescue workers walked for 5 hours through rugged terrain to reach the

site near the summit of the volcano, and very little was immediately found at the crash site, except for small pieces of the wreckage and, sadly, a passport and ID card belonging to one of the victims, a Colombian nun.

I commend the sponsor of this resolution, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY). I am pleased to be a sponsor and to join a distinguished bipartisan group of cosponsors in bringing this resolution to the floor this afternoon.

The United States maintains close cultural and economic ties with both Colombia and Ecuador. It is, therefore, appropriate that we act to express Congress' condolences to the families of the victims of the crash and commend the professional emergency personnel from Ecuador and Colombia who responded to this tragic accident.

Mr. Speaker, "Muchas gracias al personal de rescate," which translated is: Thank you all personnel who were involved in the rescue mission.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 313, and I commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) for introducing this important resolution. I also want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) for allowing it to move to the floor so expeditiously. The Crowley resolution extends our sincerest condolences to the families and loved ones of those who perished on January 28, 2002, in the crash of TAME flight 120. The resolution also applauds the brave efforts of the Ecuadorian and Colombian rescue teams.

Tragedies strike individuals and families without regard to nationalities. At these times it is important to stand shoulder to shoulder with those affected. Although nothing we can say or do will relieve the pain of those who have lost their loved ones, learning about the cause of the accident may help in the healing process and in preventing future accidents.

In this regard I want to commend the United States National Transportation Safety Board for the assistance it is offering to the Governments of Ecuador and Colombia in reviewing the black boxes of the crashed plane. I hope that the NTSB will be able to complete its review and communicate its findings to all the appropriate authorities in an expeditious manner.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), the author of this resolution.

(Mr. CROWLEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-

BALART), the cochair of the Congressional Andean Regional Caucus, for his input and expertise on these important issues. I also thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking member, for facilitating the timely consideration of this measure before us today.

It is with great sadness and a heavy heart that I bring this resolution to the floor today. Since September 11, we have seen countless tragedies, both deliberate and accidental, that have affected us all in many, many different ways. From the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the field in Pennsylvania, to the crash of American Airlines flight 587 over the Rockaways in Queens, New York, we have learned to stand together as New Yorkers, as Americans, and as humankind.

Just as the events of the past few months have affected people from around the world, so, too, do the tragedies in other lands affect us. On January 28, 2002, TAME flight 120 crashed into the Colombian Andes killing all 92 people on board. The death toll included over 45 Colombian nationals as well.

This horrific accident has indeed hit very hard close to home. As a representative of the largest Ecuadorian and Colombian communities here in the United States, I rise today to express my heartfelt condolences on behalf of myself, the people that I represent in the Seventh Congressional District of Queens and the Bronx, from the people of New York State, and from our country, the United States of America, to the families of the victims of TAME flight 120.

From Washington to Quito, and Bogota to New York, a bond exists that gives strength to those who have suffered a loss. It is this bond that will help all of us move forward together.

Mr. Speaker, I also extend my heartfelt thanks to the first responders as well as all assistance that our government has given to the countries of Ecuador and Peru. I encourage all my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to extend my thanks to my friend and colleague, Congressman CROWLEY, for all his work on this resolution.

I also would like to thank Chairman HYDE and Mr. LANTOS for quick consideration of this resolution—and thank Chairman BALLENGER for his support.

Mr. Speaker, this year has made us especially sensitive to how precious life is—and how tragedy can befall each of us without warning.

I extend my own personal condolences—as well as through this resolution—to those who lost loved ones on TAME Flight 120.

Ecuador and Colombia have been strong allies of the United States. Our peoples share strong and deep ties of family and history—Members of my own district being one of many examples. Their sorrow is our sorrow.

And as we also know well—that which can get us through such tragedies are the support of our family and friends.

So I again express my heartfelt condolences, and encourage all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 313.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REVISING CERTAIN GRANTS FOR CONTINUUM OF CARE ASSISTANCE FOR HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3699) to revise certain grants for continuum of care assistance for homeless individual and families.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3699

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. TREATMENT OF CERTAIN HOMELESS ASSISTANCE GRANTS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Notice of Funding Availability for Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs for fiscal year 2001, or any action taken in furtherance of such Notice, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall not award a grant pursuant to such Notice to Liberty Center for the Homeless Incorporated in excess of \$459,600. If an award has been made to such Center in excess of such amount before the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall modify the award and distribute the amounts in excess of \$459,600 to other applicants from the Jacksonville, Florida, Continuum of Care in the order listed in the project priority chart contained in their application.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H.R. 3699.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3699 is a simple technical correction to the continuum of care application submitted by the Jacksonville, Florida, local government and nonprofit organizations in response to the annual application process for homeless assistance funding administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Because of an error in the submitted application, and the interpretation of the HUD Reform Act that would prohibit HUD personnel from amending the application to make the corrections, statutory language is necessary. This bill will merely change the dollar amount to be distributed to the Liberty Center for the Homeless, Incorporated, to reflect an annual amount as opposed to a 10-year amount inadvertently included in the application.

Enactment of this bill and the technical correction will allow the city of Jacksonville and its nonprofit organizations to receive its entire homeless funding under Title IV of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

While it appears that this is a very minor technical problem, its impact has brought significant disruptions to the efforts of very worthy nonprofit organizations and the city of Jacksonville to coordinate and provide needed services to homeless individuals and families.

□ 1530

I want to thank the Department of Housing and Urban Development for their assistance in resolving this issue. More importantly, however, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) for bringing this issue to the attention of the Committee on Financial Services so that we can provide a legislative resolution.

This bill is noncontroversial and has support from the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), chairman and ranking member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, as well as the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE), chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services.

I urge all Members to support H.R. 3699.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW).

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3699. As has been stated, it simply corrects an administrative and clerical error in a grant application. This legislation corrects a horrible wrong that would inadvertently defund numerous projects in Jacksonville, Florida. This legislation simply turns back the clock to the date that the 11 members of the coalition sat down together and submitted a consolidated continuum-of-care application to help Jacksonville's homeless outreach projects. It does not authorize

any additional funding. It only restores the original intent of the homeless coalition's continuum-of-care application allowing funding to be restored to all existing projects and to begin funding for new projects.

Let me again repeat, this legislation will not cost the taxpayers any additional funds; and it will not change the original grant award amount. I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) for joining me as an original cosponsor of this legislation.

I urge all of my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 3699.

Mr. FRANK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I want to apologize for being a little late, but I am pleased to learn that some of the colleagues who preceded us were more concise than I had anticipated. Perhaps I am being too pessimistic about their ability.

I agree very much with what the gentleman from Florida has just said. Let me say as the ranking minority member on the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity that this is an issue that was brought to my attention early and persistently and persuasively by the gentlewoman from Florida whom the gentleman from Florida has graciously mentioned. I know they worked together on this. She pointed out that this was a matter, as has been explained, that would cost the government nothing; it was simply correcting an error.

I should say this, Mr. Speaker. As a member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, I hope that the chairman will agree that we can take up legislation that would make this sort of bill unnecessary, that is, there needs to be a capacity at HUD to correct errors of this sort. People make errors. I have had a couple of other cases that were brought to me by Members where errors were made. We have one that I hope will be coming down the pike. I know the minority and majority staffs are working with people from Indiana to try and straighten out one from Indianapolis.

I think a little history is helpful. We had terrible scandals at HUD in the early 80s. When a former member of this body, Jack Kemp, became the Secretary of HUD under the Presidency of George Bush, we worked together, the then Democratic majority in the Congress and Jack Kemp, to tighten up the rules so that the kind of abuses that had happened in the 80s would not happen again. But we appear to have overtightened. We were worried about the abuse of discretion; and we, as sometimes is the case, went too far in the other direction.

So I look forward to working with Secretary Martinez and with the majority on the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity so that we can restore some common sense, I think we have done a good deal of trying to get rid of the corruption, and the legislation of this sort would not be necessary.