

that there are other aspects of human trafficking that we must stomp out.

I am very glad that these bills are on the floor today, along with the underlying bill that I am supporting, as well as the Childhood Cancer STAR Reauthorization Act. As a person who has been involved with M.D. Anderson and Texas Children's Hospital, I know that this is going to be an important bill as it relates to childhood cancer.

Finally, in my conclusion, I simply add my support, again, for S. 1541, the Martha Wright-Reed Just and Reasonable Communications Act. I will say that it will save many of those who are incarcerated. It will put them on a pathway of rehabilitation, and it will be fair to those families who cannot afford to spend this amount of money just to communicate with their loved ones.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank everyone. This is obviously a very important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support on a bipartisan basis, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1541, the Martha Wright-Reed Just and Reasonable Communications Act, which is the Senate companion to my bill, H.R. 2489. The bill ends the practice of phone companies charging families astronomically high rates to call incarcerated loved ones in prison. These rates are unjust and unreasonable, and I am elated that this bill will finally put an end to them.

Right now, families of incarcerated people are forced to pay prohibitively expensive fees to stay connected with their loved ones through simple phone calls. It is inhumane and immoral.

We all gain when incarcerated people can remain connected to their support networks, because they have a better likelihood of not returning to jail or prison. Yet, the extreme costs of making a phone call—as much as \$25 for a 15-minute call—makes it nearly impossible for families to maintain connections. It is long past time that we prevent greedy companies from exorbitantly profiting off of families' need to stay connected.

Martha Wright, the namesake of this bill, needlessly suffered as she tried to stay in touch with her grandson when he was incarcerated.

Today, there are millions of Martha Wrights around the country who make similar sacrifices while supporting family members inside prisons and jails. One in three families go into debt just to call their loved ones.

That is unconscionable, Mr. Speaker.

These safeguards to protect families from exploitation already has widespread support. A 2020 poll commissioned by Worth Rises found that over 70 percent of Americans support providing phone calls in prisons and jails at no cost.

This fight has been decades in the making.

My friend Charlie Sullivan brought the issue to my attention when hardly anyone knew about these astronomical costs unless they were directly impacted. I introduced legislation in 2005 for the first time to address this shameful practice. Since then, protestors have repeatedly gathered outside the Federal Communications Commission, director Ava

Duvernay has taken up the cause, and the issue has been featured in podcasts and on television.

In recent years, New York City, San Francisco, San Diego, Dallas, and the State of Connecticut made phone calls free for incarcerated people.

The FCC also took steps to lower costs. But due to a 2017 Federal court decision, its authority has been restricted to only regulating calls that cross state lines. That decision made a mockery of families, creating a perverse world in which families that are just a few miles away from their incarcerated loved ones can be charged inhumane costs for a simple phone call.

That is why I took up this issue again, introducing updated and revised legislation: the Martha Wright Prison Phone Justice Act.

The legislation would confirm the FCC's regulatory power to protect all prison and jail phone calls, not just those that cross state lines. It would also establish interim rate caps of no more than five cents per minute while the FCC conducts a proceeding to determine permanent rate caps.

The House passed my bill last year, and I reintroduced the legislation this Congress alongside Senator DUCKWORTH to get the bill across the finish line. I am delighted and proud that the bill passed the Senate yesterday and will pass the House today. I have spent my entire 30 years in the House fighting for those with no voice, the downtrodden in our society, and today's vote is a culmination of those efforts. Together, we can make sure families and loved ones stay connected.

The success of this legislation would also not be possible without Martha Wright and other activists who have dedicated their lives to helping the families of the incarcerated. We are now continuing the work that they started.

I would like to thank my dear friend and colleague Chairman FRANK PALLONE, who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and his staff for his help getting this bill over the finish line.

I also want to recognize Senators TAMMY DUCKWORTH and ROB PORTMAN for their work moving the bill through the Senate.

I hope others will join me in voting in favor of this legislation. It is past time that we put an end to the practice of phone companies profiting off of vulnerable families who have no other choice.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1541.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LOW POWER PROTECTION ACT

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3405) to require the Federal Communications Commission to issue a rule providing that certain low power television stations may be accorded primary status as Class A television licensees, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3405

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Low Power Protection Act".

SEC. 2. LOW POWER TV STATIONS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term "Commission" means the Federal Communications Commission;

(2) the term "Designated Market Area" means—

(A) a Designated Market Area determined by Nielsen Media Research or any successor entity; or

(B) a Designated Market Area under a system of dividing television broadcast station licensees into local markets using a system that the Commission determines is equivalent to the system established by Nielsen Media Research; and

(3) the term "low power TV station" has the meaning given the term "digital low power TV station" in section 74.701 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to provide low power TV stations with a limited window of opportunity to apply for the opportunity to be accorded primary status as Class A television licensees.

(c) RULEMAKING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall issue a notice of proposed rulemaking to issue a rule that contains the requirements described in this subsection.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The rule with respect to which the Commission is required to issue notice under paragraph (1) shall provide that, during the 1-year period beginning on the date on which that rule takes effect, a low power TV station may apply to the Commission to be accorded primary status as a Class A television licensee under section 73.6001 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—The Commission may approve an application submitted under subparagraph (A) if the low power TV station submitting the application—

(i) satisfies—

(I) section 336(f)(2) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 336(f)(2)) and the rules issued under that section, including the requirements under such section 336(f)(2) with respect to locally produced programming, except that, for the purposes of this subclause, the period described in the matter preceding subclause (I) of subparagraph (A)(i) of such section 336(f)(2) shall be construed to be the 90-day period preceding the date of enactment of this Act; and

(II) paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of 73.6001 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation;

(ii) demonstrates to the Commission that the Class A station for which the license is sought will not cause any interference described in section 336(f)(7) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 336(f)(7)); and

(iii) as of the date of enactment of this Act, operates in a Designated Market Area with not more than 95,000 television households.

(3) APPLICABILITY OF LICENSE.—A license that accords primary status as a Class A television licensee to a low power TV station as a result of the rule with respect to which the Commission is required to issue notice under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) be subject to the same license terms and renewal standards as a license for a full power television broadcast station, except as

otherwise expressly provided in this subsection; and

(B) require the low power TV station to remain in compliance with paragraph (2)(B) during the term of the license.

(d) REPORTING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report regarding the implementation of this section, which shall include—

(1) a list of the current, as of the date on which the report is submitted, licensees that have been accorded primary status as Class A television licensees; and

(2) of the licensees described in paragraph (1), an identification of each such licensee that has been accorded the status described in that paragraph because of the implementation of this section.

(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to affect a decision of the Commission relating to completion of the transition, relocation, or reimbursement of entities as a result of the systems of competitive bidding conducted pursuant to title VI of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.), and the amendments made by that title, that are collectively commonly referred to as the “Television Broadcast Incentive Auction”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 3405.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 3405, the Low Power Protection Act.

Now more than ever, local television is the lifeline of our communities. People across the country rely on their local broadcasters for news, emergency information, and entertainment, particularly at an unfortunate time when local newspapers are either shutting down or cutting back on news coverage.

The Low Power Protection Act would help ensure that broadcasts in some rural communities are better protected from interference, just like larger stations that operate in bigger markets. Specifically, the bill would require the FCC to issue rules allowing low power television stations that serve markets with fewer than 95,000 households to apply for an upgraded license.

If granted, the low power television station would be protected from harmful interference, allowing the station to deliver important news, emergency information, and entertainment without disruption. This local news and information can be lifesaving in times of

emergency, and we need to ensure that local communities can access this information during times of crisis.

The bill is supported by the National Association of Broadcasters, among others.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting the Low Power Protection Act, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 3405, the Low Power Protection Act.

The Low Power Protection Act protects the smallest low power television stations from being displaced by full power stations and fills important gaps in broadcast services in rural communities.

Low power television stations, LPTV, typically provide local or specialized programming in their communities and are often the only television service available in rural areas. However, LPTV is currently considered a secondary broadcast service by the Federal Communications Commission, the FCC. This means LPTV licensees are not granted protections from harmful interference or displacement and must accept interference or displacement from full power television stations.

This bill will require the FCC to open a time-limited Class A window through which qualifying low power television stations could apply. The Class A status gives low power stations the same rights to their spectrum that full power stations have.

Additionally, the Class A license provides station owners the certainty that other channels cannot interfere with their signals going forward. This allows local broadcasters to continue to invest in their communities and incentivizes further investment in their stations and communities.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey, the chairman of the full Committee on Energy and Commerce, for bringing this legislation forward. I also thank Senators BLUNT and WYDEN for their bipartisan support of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues' full support of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I also urge my colleagues to support this bill on a bipartisan basis, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 3405.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1215

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE BURGESS OWENS, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable BURGESS OWENS, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 21, 2022.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I, the Honorable Burgess Owens, U.S. Representative for the 4th congressional district of Utah, have been served with a subpoena for documents issued by the Third Judicial District Court, Salt Lake County, State of Utah.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the privileges and rights of the House.

Sincerely,

BURGESS OWENS,
Member of Congress.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

Passage of H.R. 9640;

Passage of Senate 1942;

Motions to suspend the rules with respect to:

S. 3773;

S. 4104;

S. 5087;

S. 989;

S. 1402; and

Concurring in the Senate amendment to H.R. 7939.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PRESIDENTIAL TAX FILINGS AND AUDIT TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2022

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 9640) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for examination and disclosure with respect to Presidential income tax returns, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 222, nays 201, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 539]

YEAS—222

Adams
Aguilar

Allred
Auchincloss

Axne
Barragán