

would have voted "aye." This would not change the outcome of the vote.

I was necessarily absent from rollcall vote No. 194. On the motion to table amendment No. 3802, to S. 2845, I would have noted "no." This would not change the outcome of the vote.

HIS EXCELLENCY BADER OMAR AL-DAFA, AMBASSADOR OF QATAR TO THE UNITED STATES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to recognize His Excellency Bader Omar Al-Dafa, a distinguished diplomat, current Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the United States, and alumni of Western Michigan University. In 1975, Ambassador Al-Dafa, earned his bachelor's degree in political science from Western Michigan University, and I am pleased that on October 15, 2004, he will receive the prestigious Alumni Achievement Award in Political Science from Western Michigan University.

Ambassador Al-Dafa's long and distinguished career began in 1976 as a diplomatic attaché at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Doha. He has since served as ambassador in numerous posts, most recently as ambassador to the Russian Federation. Prior to this assignment, he served as non-resident ambassador to Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia; ambassador to France and non-resident ambassador to Greece; ambassador to Egypt; and ambassador to Spain. While serving in Cairo, Ambassador Al-Dafa was his country's permanent representative to the Arab League. Prior to serving as ambassador to the United States, Ambassador Al-Dafa served as the director of European and American affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Doha.

As ambassador to the United States, Bader Omar Al-Dafa's solid understanding of America and over 25 years of diplomatic experience strengthens the warm relationship between our two countries. His efforts to build relationships and foster understanding between America, Qatar and the Arab world through his work and his support for initiatives in the Arab-American community have earned him the respect and admiration of my colleagues in Congress and the citizens of Michigan.

I know my colleagues join me in congratulating Ambassador Al-Dafa for his distinguished service and the prestigious honor that Western Michigan University will confer on him. I extend to him my hopes for continued success and for an enduring relationship between our two countries. I also extend my best wishes to Ambassador Al-Dafa's wife, Awatef Mohamed Al-Dafa, and their three children.

A REAL THREAT TO SATELLITE TELEVISION SERVICE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, in 1998 and 1999 over 2 million families were faced with the prospect of losing the

ability to receive one or more of their satellite television network stations. Back then, Congress acted and not only protected access to those stations but also expanded consumer opportunities to receive more programming options.

This time around the story may not have such a happy ending. As we near the end of the session, I grow more concerned that Congress will not have time to pass a reauthorization of the Satellite Home Viewer Act. This is especially disappointing because many members of the other body and many Senators have worked diligently to craft legislative language that would be a boon to public television, the satellite industry, the movie, music and television industries, and to satellite dish owners throughout America.

Indeed, families who own satellite dishes may end up being the big losers if provisions of that act are not extended. Many midwestern and Rocky Mountain States have vast areas where satellite dish owners receive imported network stations such as ABC, NBC, CBS or Fox. Thousands of these families do not have any other choices. They do not have access to TV stations over-the-air because of mountain terrain or distance from the broadcast towers. They do not have access to cable because of the rough terrain or the lack of population density which makes it economically impossible for cable companies to invest. Without access to network stations via satellite, over-the-air, or cable those families will no longer be able to receive national news programming or other network TV programming.

If Congress does not reauthorize provisions of current law by December 31, 2004, hundreds of thousands of households will lose satellite access to network TV stations. Since information about subscribers is proprietary it is difficult for me to tell you exactly how many families will be affected by this, but I assure you it is not a small number.

The Senate Judiciary Committee got its job done in June. We reported a great bill out of Committee without a single amendment and without a single nay vote. That bill does far more than just protect satellite dish owners from losing signals. At the time I pointed out that the new satellite bill "protects subscribers in every State, expands viewing choices for most dish owners, promotes access to local programming, and increases direct, head-to-head, competition between cable and satellite providers."

I continued by saying that, "easily, this bill will benefit 21 million satellite television dish owners throughout the nation, and I am happy to note that over 85,000 of those subscribers are in Vermont."

The Senate and House Judiciary Committee-reported bills go far beyond protecting what current subscribers receive. The bills allow additional programming via satellite through adoption of the so-call "significantly

viewed" test now used for cable, but not satellite subscribers. That test means that, in general, if a person in a cable service area that historically received over-the-air TV reception from "nearby" stations outside that area, those cable operators could offer those station signals in that person's cable service area. In other words, if you were in an area in which most families in the past had received TV signals using a regular roof-top antenna then you could be offered that same signal TV via cable. By having similar rules, satellite carriers will be able to directly compete with cable providers who already operate under the significantly viewed test. This gives home dish owners more choices of programming.

In the past, Congress got the job done. Congress worked well together in 1998 and 1999 when we developed a major satellite law that transformed the industry by allowing local television stations to be carried by satellite and beamed back down to the local communities served by those stations. This marked the first time that thousands of TV owners were able to get the full complement of local network stations. In 1997 we found a way to avoid cutoffs of satellite TV service to millions of homes and to protect the local affiliate broadcast system. The following year we forged an alliance behind a strong satellite bill to permit local stations to be offered by satellite, thus increasing competition between cable and satellite providers.

We also worked with the Public Broadcasting System so they could offer a national feed as they transitioned to having their local programming beamed up to satellites and then beamed back down to much larger audiences.

Because of those efforts, in Vermont and most other States, dish owners are able to watch their local stations instead of getting signals from distant stations. Such a service allows television watchers to be more easily connected to their communities as well as providing access to necessary emergency signals, news and broadcasts.

I hope we are able to work together to finish this important satellite television bill in the few remaining days of this Congress.

A SOLEMN ANNIVERSARY

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, this fall marks a solemn 2nd anniversary of the sniper attacks which terrorized the Washington, DC area and the country for 3 weeks in 2002. In October of that year, John Allen Mohammad, who was sentenced to death, and John Lee Malvo who was sentenced to life imprisonment, indiscriminately shot 13 innocent people, killing ten.

In a settlement that marked victory for the 2002 sniper shooting victims, Bushmaster Firearms, manufacturer of the XM-15 assault rifle used in the attacks, agreed to pay \$550,000 in damages for negligence leading to criminal