

permission for students to enroll in the survival schools. All parents should be able to make decisions about their children's education, and this bill provides Native American parents with new opportunities to do so.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this worthwhile legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO
AMEND TITLE 17, UNITED
STATES CODE

HON. RICK BOUCHER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

Mr. BOUCHER. Mr. Speaker, today my colleague from Virginia, Mr. GOODLATTE, and I introduce a bill to amend Section 119 of Title 17 of the United States Code. This modest, consumer-focused measure would simply allow a court to accept a negotiated settlement between parties to a lawsuit in which it is alleged that a satellite television provider has engaged in copyright infringement by providing the signals of out-of-market television stations to illegible homes.

I, like many of our colleagues, have been flooded with phone calls over the last several weeks from concerned constituents who subscribe to EchoStar's DISH network satellite television service. They are upset and confused because their access to the signals of out-of-market network television stations was suddenly cut off, and many of them are now unable to receive any network television service from DISH. Many of the affected households are in rural and underserved areas with a limited choice of alternative video programming providers to turn to. In my district alone, thousands of people have lost service, and nationwide, 800,000 are affected.

The Satellite Home Viewer Act (SHVA), which was enacted with my support in 1988, allows residents to receive by satellite the network signals they cannot receive over-the-air from their local broadcast television stations. As a result, thousands of Southwest Virginians and millions of Americans who cannot view local television signals over the air today receive by satellite ABC, CBS, Fox and NBC network channels that originate from markets outside of their own communities. In some areas of the United States, particularly in mountainous regions like Southwest Virginia, a home may be predicted to receive a strong over-the-air signal from a local television station but not actually get a quality picture. Receipt of good local television signals is effectively blocked by obstructions between viewers' homes and the local station. These households have come to depend on the distant network channels for important news and emergency information, as well as network programming. Without SHVA, millions of Americans, particularly those in remote areas, would be denied network television programming.

Since December 1, 2006, EchoStar's DISH network has been prohibited by a permanent injunction from providing out-of-market signals to any of its subscribers due to violations of SHVA. The court which enjoined EchoStar also rejected a settlement negotiated by EchoStar and affiliates of the ABC, CBS, Fox and NBC networks which would have avoided

mass consumer disruption by allowing DISH to continue to provide most out-of-market channels. I am deeply disappointed that the court found that it could not accept the settlement, an outcome which was acceptable to the defendant and four of five plaintiffs in the case and which would not have prevented the fifth plaintiff from availing itself of the remedies provided by statute. In virtually any other lawsuit, the parties may settle at any time, even after the jury or judge has rendered its decision. I am gravely concerned that the result of the court's action has been a denial of network programming to hundreds of thousands of households located primarily in remote areas.

The simple, straightforward measure we introduce today would merely clarify that the court has the option of accepting a settlement between the parties to a distant signal copyright infringement lawsuit. It would enable the court to protect consumers, who are the true victims here, from the abrupt cutoff of all network television service. The ability to receive network television programming is important to Southwest Virginians, and I am committed to assuring its availability by satellite throughout my district.

I therefore urge my colleagues to protect rural households by adopting this measure and clarifying that a court may adopt a settlement to which the parties in a lawsuit have agreed.

WELCOME TO FIRST LADY OF THE
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, MRS.
MEHRIBAN ALIYEVA

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, as the new co-chairman of the Azerbaijan Caucus, it is a privilege to join with my good friend, the gentleman from Texas and fellow co-chairman SOLOMON ORTIZ, to welcome to Washington, DC, the first lady of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva.

We welcome Mrs. Aliyeva as a member of the Azerbaijan parliament—Milli Majlis—and as chairperson of the United States-Azerbaijan Inter-Parliamentary Working Group.

This week, Mrs. Aliyeva and a delegation of parliamentarians from Azerbaijan are meeting with Members of Congress and administration offices to further reinforce understanding of Azerbaijan and encourage dialogue between Congress and the Milli Majlis.

Members of the parliamentary delegation include: Gultakin Haciyeva, New Azerbaijan Party; Ganira Pashayeva, Independent; Evda Abramov, Independent; Malahat Hasanova, New Azerbaijan Party; and Ali Huseynov, New Azerbaijan Party. Also part of the delegation is Deputy Foreign Minister Hafiz Pashayev, a former ambassador from the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United States.

We thank our distinguished colleagues for their visit and encourage continued support of the Inter-Parliamentary Working Group and coordination with the Republic of Azerbaijan, one of our important strategic allies.

TRIBUTE TO KAZAKHSTAN

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the country of Kazakhstan on the occasion of its 15th anniversary of independence from the former Soviet Union on December 16, 1991. Kazakhstan has been at the crossroads of trade and empires for centuries along the ancient Silk Road, and today plays an increasingly important role in the stability and security of the Central Asian region, and of our world.

I had the privilege of visiting Kazakhstan along with Congressman JIM MCDERMOTT, Congressman MAURICE HINCHEY and former member Don Bonker in January of this year to see first hand the accomplishments that have been made since 1991. While in Kazakhstan we spent considerable time with members of the President's Cabinet and the current speaker of the senate, Nurtai Abykayev learning about current work going on in their country and their endeavors in making Kazakhstan a real leader in Asia and the world.

In the first few years after independence, Kazakhstan successfully rid itself of the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world and closed the world's largest nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk, an unwanted legacy from the U.S.S.R., and continues to be a model for the global community. In 2005, the U.S. Senate unanimously adopted a resolution congratulating Kazakhstan on the 10th anniversary of the removal of all nuclear weapons from the country and commended Kazakhstan-U.S. cooperation in this sphere as a "model." Earlier this year, this House unanimously adopted resolution 905 congratulating Kazakhstan on the 15th anniversary of the closure of the world's second largest nuclear test site in the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan and for its efforts on the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Kazakhstan condemned the terrorist attacks against the U.S. on September 11, 2001 and has been a staunch supporter of the U.S. led international coalition against global terrorism since. Kazakhstan provides free overflight rights and a major international airport for U.S. and coalition aircraft for operations in Afghanistan. Kazakhstan works with the international community to bring peace and stability to Iraq following the U.S. led campaign to end Saddam Hussein's regime. Kazakh military engineers in that country have destroyed more than 4 million pieces of ordnance since 2003.

On a visit to Astana in 2005, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said, "Today, Kazakhstan is poised and ready to break a path for a new Silk Road, a great corridor of reform . . . A strong and prosperous and democratic Kazakhstan will once again energize the global transmission of learning, and trade and freedom across the steppes of Central Asia. This nation has a glorious past and it is destined for a hopeful future. Kazakhstan's greatest days lie ahead of it. And the United States wants to be your partner."

During his 2006 visit to Washington President Nazarbayev and President George W. Bush signed a joint statement which says, "We are satisfied with the progress made by