

116TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. 637

Commemorating the 35th anniversary of United States broadcasting to Cuba.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 23, 2020

Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 35th anniversary of United States
broadcasting to Cuba.

Whereas the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act (Public Law 98–111) passed by a wide margin in the House of Representatives on September 29, 1983, and passed unanimously by voice vote in the Senate on September 12, 1983;

Whereas, upon signing the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act into law on October 4, 1983, President Ronald Reagan said that the law “responds to an important foreign policy initiative of my administration: to break Fidel Castro’s monopoly on news and information within Cuba”, further explaining that the purpose of providing impartial news to the Cuban people was so that they “will be in a better position to make Cuba’s leaders accountable for

their conduct in foreign policy, economic management, and human rights.”;

Whereas radio service into Cuba was named “Radio Martí” after renowned 19th century Cuban patriot Jose Martí;

Whereas, on May 20, 1985, the 83rd anniversary of Cuba’s Independence Day, Radio Martí began its first broadcast into Cuba;

Whereas, in 1990, Congress passed and President George H.W. Bush signed into law the Television Broadcasting to Cuba Act (Public Law 101–246), which expanded broadcasting to include television, and “Television Martí” commenced broadcasting later that year;

Whereas President William Jefferson Clinton signed into law the Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–134), which required the relocation of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting from Washington, DC, to South Florida;

Whereas the Office of Cuba Broadcasting was relocated to Miami, Florida in 1998, ahead of schedule and under budget;

Whereas United States broadcasts to Cuba were initiated to pierce the Castro regime’s information blockade and to provide timely, accurate, uncensored, and reliable information to the Cuban people;

Whereas the Office of Cuba Broadcasting at the United States Agency for Global Media (USAGM) oversees Radio and Television Martí;

Whereas Radio and Television Martí are multimedia hubs of news, information, and analysis that provide the people of Cuba with interactive programs 7 days a week through satellite television, shortwave and AM radio, and digital

platforms, including its website, flash drives, emails, DVDs, and SMS text;

Whereas Radio and Television Martí aim to inform and engage the people of Cuba by providing credible news and information rooted in respect for fundamental freedoms, democratic principles, and universal human rights;

Whereas the Office of Cuba Broadcasting facilitates critical technology services, allowing Cubans across provinces to connect, and linking Cuban pro-democracy activists with an expanding worldwide network of activists engaged in their own struggles for freedom and human rights in their respective countries;

Whereas, on July 14, 2011, independent journalist and former political prisoner Jose Daniel Ferrer said, “the particular stories, the news selected for A Fondo [a joint Voice of America and Radio Martí program], is what gives the show its quality, very professional. I listened to the show in prison on a daily basis.”;

Whereas Karen Caballero of Radio and Television Martí received the David Burke Award in 2012 for her inspired coverage of the “Lights of Liberty Flotilla”, a small group of boats with a mission to sail across the Florida Strait to bring attention to the solidarity between Cuban exiles and those on the island, and to the human rights abuses perpetrated by the regime in Cuba;

Whereas, on August 13, 2013, Afro-Cuban activist and former political prisoner Jorge Luis García-Pérez stated, “In the 17 years that I spent behind bars, Radio Martí was, at times, my ‘everything’. It was my lifeline.”; and

Whereas, in 2017, Television Martí’s “Alas de Libertad” (Wings of Freedom), which documented the activities of

the Brigade 2506 Air Force division during the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, received the Suncoast Regional Emmy Award from The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) celebrates the 35th anniversary of Radio
3 Martí and the 30th anniversary of Television Martí;

4 (2) recognizes the vital role that independent
5 broadcasting to Cuba has served in providing uncen-
6 sored, reliable, and accurate information to the
7 Cuban people for the past 35 years;

8 (3) honors the journalists, programming edi-
9 tors, technical support, and many other employees at
10 Radio and Television Martí, administered through
11 the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, who commit to
12 high journalistic standards, tenacity, and providing
13 unbiased, objective information to the Cuban people;

14 (4) remembers the deep and lasting contribu-
15 tions that the free flow of information, including
16 broadcasting, to Cuba has provided to the Cuban
17 people in bolstering Cuba's pro-democracy move-
18 ment; and

19 (5) reaffirms the importance of the United
20 States strengthening policies in support of pro-
21 moting democracy, promoting freedom of the press,
22 and supporting the transmission of external, reliable,

- 1 objective information to some of the most repressed
- 2 parts of the world.

