

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1996

**HON. JOHN SHIMKUS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 12, 1998*

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, two years ago this week, after literally years of intense and contentious debate, the President signed into law the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Passage of this landmark legislation represented the largest overhaul of our nation's communications laws in more than 60 years. The Telecommunications Act was intended to remove long standing monopoly protections to allow customers to get long-distance service from their local phone company or local phone service from their long-distance or cable company. This historic new law would also permit customers to get many communications services—local and long distance phone service, cable and cellular service—from one company on one bill.

Many in Congress hailed this new law as the "greatest jobs bill of the decade." The President praised the law saying "customers will receive the benefits of lower prices, better quality and greater choices in their telephone and cable service, and they will continue to benefit from a diversity of voices and viewpoints in radio, television and the print media."

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, it's two years later and consumers have yet to see most of the benefits. What they do see are mergers and lawsuits filed by frustrated would-be competitors. Thus far the Federal Communications Commission has rejected bids by three of the former Bell Companies seeking to enter the long-distance market. In many areas, cable rates have risen and potential new competitors struggle to secure the necessary programming which is critical to their survival and growth.

The FCC has a new Chairman and three new commissioners. While I am encouraged by their public statements pledging to move forward with implementation of the Act—I am disappointed in the fact that little, if any, progress has been made. There is absolutely no reason why Americans can't start realizing the benefits of the Telecommunications Act now.

## JAPAN'S OPEN MARKET COMMITMENT

**HON. BOB SCHAFFER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 12, 1998*

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for the U.S. Trade Representative's announcement of February 3, 1998, regarding Japan's Open Market Commitment. This is the first time the United States has held Japan to its publicly-stated commitments concerning its

photographic film and paper market. Eastman Kodak Company, one of America's most reputable companies, has maintained a market presence in Japan for over a century. Yet in all that time, Kodak has never received fair access to consumer markets. Kodak has consistently been forced to contend with an elaborate system of unfair and arbitrary trade barriers created by a close alliance between Japanese business and Japanese government entities. These market arrangements are aimed specifically at nurturing domestic producers at the expense of consumers and U.S. competitors. The U.S. Trade Representative's statement regarding Japan's Open Market Commitment is a clear sign that the anti-U.S. trade conditions in Japan are no longer acceptable.

Asia's current economic challenges and subsequent failures are a direct consequence of the flawed Asian economic model inspired and popularized by Japan. Japan's tradition of controlling its economy and favoring specific producers has been duplicated in countries like Korea, Indonesia and Thailand, and is now being exposed as a prescription for economic failure. Japan's economic instability is demonstrated by the collapse of its fourth-largest securities firm and tenth-largest bank within days of each other. Equally, its financial crisis has brought to light far-reaching government corruption, including a scandal which forced the resignation of Finance Minister Heroshi Mitzuka, the most powerful member of the Japanese cabinet, as well as the arrests of two of his senior ministry officials. These developments expose ever-widening collusion between the Japanese government and specific Japanese businesses. These economic and financial crises stem from Japanese inflexibility, resistance to change, and the exclusion of foreign competitors.

Japan's Open Market Commitment directly addresses the need for economic flexibility and open competition. It insists Japan fulfill its publicly-stated commitments to open its markets, to increase competition, and to end control of its economy by powerful bureaucrats. Rather than government officials bent on dictating unrealistic economic outcomes, Japan's economy must be led by free market discipline.

## TRIBUTE TO ELIZABETH HEFLIN- McCLOUD

**HON. SANDER M. LEVIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 12, 1998*

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Mrs. Elizabeth Hefflin-McCloud, a Royal Oak Township Trustee. Mrs. McCLOUD died in her home on January 6, 1998.

Born in Talladega, Alabama in 1918 to Oscar and Little Ywyman, Mrs. McCLOUD later moved to Michigan. Here, through her association with many community and civic organi-

zations, Mrs. McCLOUD made a difference in the lives of so many people. She served on the Library Board, Oakdale Activity Committee, New Mount Vernon Church, Business and Professional Women, AFL-CIO, Community Development Block Grant, Township Beautification Committee, and the Democratic Club of Ferndale and Royal Oak Township.

After working 38 years at Chrysler Corporation, Mrs. McCLOUD decided to enter public service, and served as a Royal Oak Township Trustee from 1992 to the present. She was a friend of so many people and of so many causes.

I ask my colleagues to join me as we extend our sincere sympathy to the friends and relatives of Mrs. McCLOUD who will always be remembered for her outstanding contributions to the world around her.

## JOHN TRACY, KERN COUNTY CATTLEMAN OF THE YEAR

**HON. WILLIAM M. THOMAS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 12, 1998*

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize John Tracy of Buttonwillow, California. John Tracy, a fourth generation Kern County rancher, is the recipient of the 1998 "Kern County Cattleman of the Year" award. Kern County is one of the country's biggest agricultural counties, and cattle are one of Kern's most important products.

The Tracy family has been in Kern County over 120 years, and John is carrying on in his family's footsteps. John took over running his family's ranch when he was just 22 years old, after the death of his father. Armed with a Bachelor of Science in farm management from Cal Poly, Mr. Tracy carried on his family's proud heritage and made many innovations in the ranch's operation. Among these were reorganizing his cow-calf grazing operation into an intensive feedlot enterprise and using agricultural by-products in a scientifically balanced nutrition program, thus making conservation and recycling work.

Since taking over his family's operation nearly 30 years ago, John Tracy has become an integral and active part of the agricultural community in Kern County. He has been director of both the Kern County Cattlemen's Association and the California Beef Council. The work of John and his family with the Kern County Fair's Junior Livestock Auction has made him an outstanding role model, as well as for the young people of Kern County.

John Tracy has earned the respect and admiration of his peers and of his neighbors. He has served as Buttonwillow's honorary Mayor and last year received the Buttonwillow Peace Officers Recognition of Merit. He has been described by other ranchers as "a 21st century businessman with 19th century cattleman values."

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