

Larry returned to Colorado and worked for the Garfield County Airport. He then owned and operated L&L Sanitation Service.

Larry loved animals, especially his dog, Happy. Larry also sang with the "Sagebrush Singers" of the Battlement Mesa and liked to go hunting, hiking, swimming and flying.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remember Mr. Larry Lederhause, a great American who was loved and cherished by many.

THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS
COMMISSION STATEMENT IN
REFERENCE TO CERTAIN TYPES
OF RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 31, 2000

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, in December of last year, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) overstepped its bounds and authority by issuing statements that if enforced, would restrict certain types of religious broadcasting.

I am happy to report that the FCC reversed its decision on Friday. I applaud the decision of the FCC but am troubled that such a decision was ever made.

While issuing a ruling on a routine license transfer, the FCC editorialize about new, strict standards for educational programming that could have affected many non-commercial, educational television broadcasters. The FCC stated that "religious exhortation, proselytizing, or statements of personally-held religious views and beliefs generally would not qualify as 'general education' programming. Thus, church services generally will not qualify as 'general education' under our rules."

It is arrogance of the highest form for the FCC to attempt to determine what is—and what is not educational. The FCC's statements amount to an unconstitutional restriction on religious speech. This type of content regulation and suppression of religious expression is not acceptable. The FCC is neither qualified nor does it have any legal authority to engage in this sort of line drawing.

The FCC was established by the Communications Act of 1934 and is charged with regulating interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite and cable. The FCC's jurisdiction covers the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. possessions. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is an independent United States government agency, directly responsible to Congress.

Shortly after reading the FCC's anti-religious statements, Reps. MIKE OXLEY, STEVE

LARGENT, CLIFF STEARNS and I wrote the Chairman of the FCC to remind him that the FCC is still directly responsible to Congress and that he should reverse the anti-religious statements or he could stand by and see it overturned by Congressional action.

Last week, we introduced H.R. 3525—The Religious Broadcasting Freedom Act to overturn the ruling issued by the FCC and did so with over 60 cosponsors. The FCC is accountable to the Congress and I believe we have demonstrated that we will take decisive action when the FCC or any other federal agency exceeds its authority—and especially when such actions threaten our religious freedoms.

The FCC's action was an unprecedented action by a government agency in an attempt to decide what is acceptable religious programming and content. The fact is, it is not the place of any government agency to determine what is acceptable religious speech because religious freedom and freedom of speech are both protected by the Constitution.

I have heard from many religious broadcasters in Mississippi and across the country who expressed outrage at the FCC and their actions. I am pleased to tell them that we have stopped this un-Constitutional decision in its tracks. Yet, I urge my colleagues to remain vigilant. I assure you that if the FCC takes any actions that suggest they may attempt to pursue this action in any other format, I will fight it once again.

TRIBUTE TO PHIL BLAZER

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 31, 2000

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues Mr. BERMAN and Mr. SHERMAN, and I rise today to ask our colleagues to join us in honoring the extraordinary career of our dear friend Phil Blazer. Phil has dedicated his thirty-five-year career to serving the Jewish community as editor and publisher of the Jewish News and as an effective activist for important Jewish and human rights causes. Phil began his career as an eager and wide-eyed seventeen-year-old radio announcer at KVFM in the San Fernando Valley of California. He moved to Minnesota for college and continued his radio career at KUXL, and quickly began a Jewish community radio program for Minneapolis and St. Paul. After college, he returned to KVFM as station manager and con-

tinued his Jewish community program in the San Fernando Valley. Phil's current radio program is now on KIEV and is heard throughout Southern California. He has many devoted listeners who depend on his program for news, perspective, and insight.

In 1977, Phil started a television program, which still airs today and is now carried in over 300 communities in Southern California. It is also broadcast in New York City and New Jersey on Sundays. His audience numbers over 250,000 people and he has become an icon to his audiences throughout the nation.

Perhaps Phil's greatest contribution has been his newspaper, The Jewish News, which he founded in 1973. Hardly a local paper, it now serves 73 countries worldwide. The Jewish News serves to connect distinct Jewish communities by sharing local, national and international news and trends. It is a beloved paper and a staple of Los Angeles Jewish life.

Phil's career has also been dedicated to human rights work and Jewish causes. He is a visionary leader who has worked to shape critical historical events. In 1973, he helped smuggle a Torah into Leningrad to support the Jews of Russia. In 1978, he traveled to Washington, D.C. at the invitation of former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to confer with the State Department and the White House as a participant in the redirection of U.S. Middle East policy.

Also in 1978, Phil attended the historic Begin/Sadat meeting in Jerusalem. The following year he aired a landmark broadcast of his radio program via satellite from the studios of Radio Cairo as the guest of Anwar Sadat.

Phil's philanthropic work continued in 1985 when he organized the now famous Operation Joshua, which succeeded in rescuing nearly 1,000 Ethiopian Jews from refugee camps in Sudan and resettling them in Israel. In 1992, Phil developed California legislation with Assemblyman Richard Katz that mandated a course of study about the Holocaust be taught in all California public schools. This bill was signed into law by the Governor of California on September 21, 1992.

These are a few examples of Phil's tireless dedication to Jewish causes and human rights around the world. His real gift, however, is his compassion and love for humankind. While successfully building his own media empire, Phil has never lost sight of his commitment to better the human condition in every way possible. He is truly an example of one person making a difference in thousands of people's lives.

Mr. Speaker, we ask our colleagues to join us in honoring Phil Blazer for his remarkable accomplishments over the past thirty-five years and in wishing him continued success and happiness in all future endeavors.