

To All Amateur Radio Operators:

The ARRL and Amateur Radio need your help as soon as possible. This is not a request for funding, but your assistance with HR-4969, a bill that would extend the protection of PRB-1 to those affected by Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&R's).

Nearly 30 years ago, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released PRB-1, an order that required municipalities to offer "reasonable accommodation" for outside amateur radio antenna installations. This order cited a "strong federal interest" in supporting effective amateur radio communications. The order stopped short of requiring communities with CC&R's to do the same.

The FCC's argument was that they did not want to interfere with "private contracts" between Homeowner Associations (HOA's) and hams. In reality, however, it is generally a unilateral contract where an individual's only option is to decide NOT to buy a parcel of land that is burdened with CC&R's.

Perhaps the most pervasive threat to Amateur Radio is restriction of the ability to have effective outdoor antenna systems, primarily due to the exponential growth of communities with CC&R's. From the Community Associations Website (CAI), in 1970 there were 10,000 communities with HOA's, involving 2.1 million residents. By 2011, there were 314,200 communities involving 62.3 million residents! Accordingly, in many areas, it is virtually impossible to find a suitable home that is not affected by CC&R's. Moreover, these HOA's are not even required to "come to the table" to discuss the possibility of a ham putting up an effective outdoor antenna system. Many HOA's ban them outright!

HR-4969 is a bill that would instruct the FCC to extend PRB-1 protection to homes and property encumbered with CC&R's. It is entitled "The Amateur Radio Parity Act". It is the result of a bipartisan effort led by Rep Adam Kinzinger (R-IL) with initial co-sponsorship by Rep Joe Courtney (D-CT). Currently, there are five cosponsors, including Rep Mike McIntyre (D-NC-7) from our Division. The ARRL's goal is at least 30 cosponsors.

Here's where we need your help. We need cosponsors! We need letters and individual visits with your Representatives at their district offices during the Congressional recess in August. All the tools you

will need are available (including a sample letter) on the ARRL website: www.arrl.org/hr-4969 . The site is being updated often, so be sure to check the website daily. Additionally, our ARRL president Kay Craigie N3KN has established a twitter feed: @KayCraigieN3KN. The hashtag for the bill is #hr4969.

One of the reasons why this is an “all hands on deck” effort is that we have substantial opposition. The Community Associations Institute has already sent a communication to all its members, advising them to oppose the bill. Associa, a community management agency, will be meeting with Rep Kinzinger to have him “reconsider” his sponsorship of the bill. So, we need ALL ARRL MEMBERS in the Roanoke Division to participate. The ARRL’s 501(c)3 status does not allow us to make this request of non-members, however, they are free to act on their own, as it is in Amateur Radio’s best interest to do so. Further information will follow. Please visit www.arrl.org/hr-4969 and fill out your sample letter today. Instructions on sending it to ARRL Headquarters (to be hand delivered to your Representative) are on the website.

Thank you!

'73 de Jim N2ZZ

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