

Amateur Radio Parity Act Bill Unable to Overcome Florida Senator's Objections

The Amateur Radio Parity Act, H.R. 1301, suffered an unbecoming demise on December 9 as the 114th Congress drew to a close. After passing the House of Representatives on a unanimous vote earlier this fall, the bill stalled in the Senate due to the intervention of only one member, Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL). The measure would have directed the FCC to extend its rules relating to reasonable accommodation of Amateur Service communications to private land-use restrictions, such as covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs) imposed by homeowners associations.

"[During 2016] Nelson received thousands of e-mails, letters, and phone calls from concerned constituents asking for his support of H.R. 1301. Numerous meetings were held with his senior staff in an effort to move the legislation forward," ARRL said in a [news release](#). "Negotiations, which led to an agreement with the Community Associations Institute ([CAI](#)), the national association of homeowner's associations and publicly supported by CAI and ARRL, were brushed aside by Sen. Nelson as irrelevant."

In a final meeting with Nelson's staff as the 114th Congress neared adjournment, it became clear that no matter what was said or done, the Senator would oppose the bill and refuse to allow it to move forward. Because the measure had not been put on the floor schedule, the only way it could have passed the Senate would have been through a process called "unanimous consent." A Senate member may request unanimous consent on the floor to set aside rules and expedite proceedings. If any single Senator objects, though, the request is rejected.

The unhappy ending followed nearly 2 years of intense effort on the part of ARRL and thousands of its members, who contacted their Congressional representatives to urge their support of the measure on Capitol Hill. The ARRL Board of Directors is expected to discuss the future of the initiative at its January meeting.

Source:

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