

CONFIDENTIAL

Report of the Ad Hoc Legislative Advocacy Committee, dated July 15, 2019

Following the re-submission of updated versions of the Amateur Radio Parity Act (ARPA) at the end of 2018, just prior to the League's First Annual Board meeting, on January 18, 2019, the Board of Directors adopted the following motion by a 10 to 5 vote:

Whereas, the ARRL filed a Petition for Rule Making for Amendment of Part 97 of the Commission's Rules Governing the Amateur Radio Service; Private Land Use Regulations Restricting Amateur Radio Communications, with the Federal Communications Commission, on or about December 17, 2018, prior to review by the Board of Directors at its January 2019 Meeting;

Whereas, the ARRL has been advised that our Congressional sponsors subsequent to December 17, 2018, and without prior notification to the management or Board of Directors of the ARRL, re-filed the legislation formerly known as the Amateur Radio Parity Act; and

Whereas, the Board of Directors desires to review, reexamine and reappraise the ARRL's regulatory and legislative policy with regard to private land use restrictions, with the intent to renew, continue and strengthen the ARRL's effort to achieve relief from such restrictions.

It is hereby decided that the ARRL immediately and formally withdraw, without prejudice to re-filing, the aforesaid Petition for Rule Making as being inconsistent and at cross purposes with the recent re-filing of the Amateur Radio Parity Act, and that our Congressional sponsors be consulted with and requested to refrain from seeking to advance the Amateur Radio Parity Act until they receive further input on this subject from the ARRL.

After withdrawal of the Petition for Rule Making and enlisting Matt Keelen's assistance in conveying the Board's decision to our friends and sponsors on the Hill, the Committee was consulted on the development of a statement for the January 24, 2019 edition of the ARRL Letter describing the Board's decision to suspend its efforts on passage of ARPA, and assuring members that the action did not constitute an abandonment of the League's efforts in seeking relief from private land use restrictions. Further information on the Board's action was contained in the April issue of QST.

While it was determined that the immediate scheduling of meetings on the Hill was unnecessary, an understandable analysis of the deficiencies of ARPA needed to be created and disseminated immediately to our sponsors and friends on the Hill. Members of the Committee rapidly completed this task by February 1, and received positive feedback from recipients of the memorandum. It was decided that in-person follow-up would occur later in the process after a new direction had been developed.

Questions about the Board's actions with respect to ARPA have been raised at several ARRL Forums (including the Hamvention) where assurances were given to members that the Board intends to "renew, continue and strengthen" the League's efforts to obtain relief from private land use restrictions.

Subsequently, the Committee held a meeting by telephone conference bridge on March 7 in which a number of issues were discussed concerning the status of ARPA, efforts to formulate a model statute or rule, the role of League counsel in the Committee's work, the nature of Keelen's further involvement, a tentative schedule for meeting(s) in DC and the potential for creation of a PAC and/or political action entity for the ARRL. Members of the Committee who are already involved in state legislative efforts were asked to work on a model statute in anticipation of future legislative efforts.

Committee efforts focused on organizing separate meetings in Washington, DC with League counsel, David Siddall, our former lobbyist, Matt Keelen and a small group local Hams connected with various governmental and NGO partners to solicit their input and assistance in charting a future course of action for the pursuit of our members' interests. Originally scheduled for May 8-9, 2019, the meetings were postponed until June 11-12, 2019, in an effort to coordinate with separate meetings over the League's symbol rate petition.

After meeting amongst ourselves and with our counsel, we invited Matt Keelen to meet with us at the hotel. We discussed with Matt his assisting the Committee in strategizing a new approach to our legislative efforts under a 90-day “bullet” contract. The Committee subsequently reviewed, revised and executed a contract with The Keelen Group to provide advice and recommendations regarding our federal and state relationships as well as organizing and guiding meetings between ARRL representatives and key Congressional allies in support of Amateur Radio initiatives. A fixed fee of \$12,000 for a contract term ending October 1, 2019, was discussed with the A&F Committee and approved by President Roderick.

We discussed with Matt some of his initial impressions concerning our prior legislative efforts the gist of which was that we should make more use of our non-Congressional allies such as we did with the DOD in connection with obtaining a letter in support of PRB-1, and considerations relating to our role in public service and emergency communications. (A copy of TKG’s initial Report and Recommendations is appended to this Report.)

Later that day, the scheduled luncheon meeting was convened. A conference room facility had been secured by our counsel, and approximately 18 individuals were invited for such diverse organizations as the NTIA, DHS, FEMA, DOD, etc. The League representatives present were Jim Tiemstra, Rick Roderick, Tom Abernethy, John Robert Stratton, Fred Hopengarten and David Siddall. Given the relatively short notice (under two weeks) that we had provided, the turnout was tremendous. About twelve individuals showed up for a working luncheon with only a couple of individuals sending their regrets due to conflicts. The group was energetic, engaged and seemed pleased to be involved. Some said this type of meeting was too long in coming, and many stated that the ARRL should be more involved in Washington.

Although we had an agenda of issues to raise to initiate the discussion, the real objective of the meeting was to re-establish our connections in DC, and open a continuing dialogue over renewed initiatives for Amateur Radio. We made it clear that this was only the first in a series of such meetings that will be regularly scheduled by the League. Echoing the earlier remarks by Matt Keelen, Amateur Radio’s role in EmComm seemed to be our “ace in the hole” for exerting influence, with the FEMA representatives universally singing our praises. However, we were cautioned to maintain the image of the League with respect to training and communications expertise so that there are no cultural problems with

the EmComm community. Also, grave concern was expressed over the absence of sufficient support for STEM on many levels. It was suggested that the ARRL pitch STEM to outside groups focusing on college through age 30, and possibly look to industry to explore supportive relationships. Indeed, favorable mention was made of Jon Siberling's half day seminars on spectrum policy. In addition, suggestions were made as to the ARRL's greater involvement in the various advisory committees (e.g. – FACA, the FEMA national advisory committee) some of whose meetings can be attended by teleconference. Much of this discussion seemed to suggest that the League needs a more active and involved presence in Washington which might involve adding additional staff. The meeting wrapped up after lasting about twice as long as had been anticipated.

All-in-all the meeting felt like a success in our initial efforts to reach out to our friends and supporters in DC. We encouraged those attending to identify for us others who would be helpful in supporting our initiatives. This meeting did not include representatives from the Hill which would entail a more organized and systematic approach on a separate trip, possibly in connection with the receipt of Keelen's recommendations in the Fall. (However, this may need to be delayed due to an expected budget crisis at the end of this fiscal year.) Also, it has been suggested that we separately involve industry and industry groups in meetings to obtain their insights and input for future initiatives.

Respectfully submitted,

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