

ISSUANCE OF RADIO OPERATOR LICENSES TO
NATIONALS OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 9, 1962.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State
of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. MOULDER, from the Committee on Interstate and Foreign
Commerce, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 1589]

The Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1589) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to authorize the issuance of radio operator licenses to nationals of the United States, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE

The purpose of S. 1589 is to amend section 303(l) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, so as to authorize the Federal Communications Commission to issue radio operator licenses to natives of American Samoa who are nationals of the United States and owe allegiance to it, but to whom full citizenship has not been extended.

GENERAL STATEMENT

This legislation is urged by the Department of Interior for the main purpose of enhancing safe and efficient navigation by the use of radio in the American Samoa area.

Under existing law (sec. 303(l) of the Communications Act of 1934), the Federal Communications Commission may issue radio operator licenses only to citizens of the United States and in certain cases to foreign nationals in the field of aviation.

Section 303(1) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, reads as follows:

SEC. 303. Except as otherwise provided in this Act, the Commission from time to time, as public convenience, interest, or necessity requires shall—

* * * * *

(1) Have authority to prescribe the qualifications of station operators, to classify them according to the duties to be performed, to fix the forms of such licenses, and to issue them to such citizens of the United States as the Commission finds qualified, except that in issuing licenses for the operation of radio stations on aircraft the Commission may, if it finds that the public interest will be served thereby, waive the requirement of citizenship in the case of persons holding United States pilot certificates or in the case of persons holding foreign aircraft pilot certificates which are valid in the United States on the basis of reciprocal agreements entered into with foreign governments;

The committee held hearings at which representatives of the Department of the Interior and the Federal Communications Commission testified on this legislation.

According to the Department of Interior, the inability of nationals of the United States to obtain operator licenses imposes a serious handicap upon shipping in and from the waters of American Samoa, since numerous privately owned craft are manned by Samoans who are U.S. nationals but not citizens.

Under this bill the Federal Communications Commission will be empowered to issue radio operator licenses to the nationals of the United States as well as to citizens.

The Samoan people owe complete allegiance to the United States, have proved their loyalty for almost 60 years under the American flag and have served their country bravely on many battlefields. Your committee knows of no reason why these nationals should not be equally eligible with citizens to obtain radio operator licenses.

Your committee therefore urges the enactment of this legislation.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3 of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (new matter is printed in italics, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

SECTION 303(1) OF THE COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934 (48 STAT. 1082; 47 U.S.C. 303(1))

GENERAL POWERS OF THE COMMISSION

SEC. 303. Except as otherwise provided in this Act, the Commission from time to time, as public convenience, interest, or necessity requires shall—

* * * * *

(1) Have authority to prescribe the qualifications of station operators, to classify them according to the duties to be performed, to fix the forms of such licenses, and to issue them to such citizens *or nationals* of the United States as the Commission finds qualified, except that in issuing licenses for the operation of radio stations on aircraft the Commission may, if it finds that the public interest will be served thereby, waive the requirement of citizenship in the case of persons holding United States pilot-certificates or in the case of persons holding foreign aircraft pilot certificates which are valid in the United States on the basis of reciprocal agreements entered into with foreign governments;

