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Conference telephone call, Wednesday, 1959 July 15

Strom Thurmond

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The Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee approved this morning with minor changes my bill to clarify the "equal time" provisions of the Communications Act. On my motion we made the bill a committee bill. It will be placed on the Senate calendar for expected early action by the full Senate.

The heart of the bill reads as follows: QUOTE "Appearance by a legally qualified candidate on any newscast, news interview, news documentary, on-the-spot coverage of news events or panel discussion, shall not be deemed to be use of a broadcasting station within the meaning of this subsection." UNQUOTE

The bill also states that it is the intention of Congress to reexamine this amendment from time to time, with the advice of the Federal Communications Commission, to determine that the public interest is being protected and to assure equal treatment of all legally qualified candidates for office.