

[The Alexander Wireless Bill]

Modern Electrics, vol. 4 no. 11

February 1912

DRAFT: Please do not share without permission of the author. Typeset versions in [web](#) / [pdf](#) / [doc](#)

ELSEWHERE we print a copy of the new Alexander Wireless Bill.¹

Before we go any further we might as well tell all those interested in wireless that it is not necessary to feel any anxiety over this or any other wireless bill. We have noted in the past that every time we have printed any of the various wireless bills there was almost a panic among the amateurs and other wireless interests.

Readers of this magazine well know the policy that *Modern Electrics* has always pursued, and as far as the interests of the wireless amateurs is concerned, it is not necessary to point out that the proprietors of this magazine have always stood up for the wireless amateurs.

This holds true of the Alexander bill, and as soon as the bill was made public, *Modern Electrics* at once took steps to safeguard these interests. A great number of protesting letters were written at once to Washington and the results accomplished so far are distinctly encouraging, in so far as the amateurs and other wireless interests are concerned. As far as the Alexander bill itself is concerned, it is no worse than previous ones; in fact if it should be passed, which we doubt, it would not hurt the wireless amateurs in the least, inasmuch as this bill covers only interstate business. Wireless amateurs living in the same state could communicate with each other the same as before.

¹The Alexander Wireless Bill was introduced for debate in congress on December 11, 1911 by Joshua W. Alexander, Democratic representative from Missouri. Alexander later served as the US Secretary of Commerce and was succeeded by Herbert Hoover, who would play a decisive role in the creation of the Federal Communications Commission (see “**Who Will Save the Radio Amateur?**”). The Alexander Bill was the kernel that eventually became the Radio Act of 1912. While the bill included no mention of amateur stations, after months of debate and agitation among wireless communities, the Radio Act of 1912 explicitly defined the acceptable range of activities available to amateurs.

The Government realizes fully the importance of the American amateurs to-day, and if any bill should be passed, it will be one that regulates wireless, but in no way suppresses it.

This, *Modern Electrics* has always advocated. In fact *Modern Electrics* is heartily in accord with any bill that should regulate wireless in such a way that the amateurs do not interfere with commercial or Government business, which is only right and fair.

As stated elsewhere in this issue, Government officials have already been busy in New York of late, to find out what equipment the various amateurs use, what their wave lengths are, what power they use, etc.

This is distinctly encouraging, because it shows that the Government is getting accurate information before trying to pass any bill.

There should be a bill passed restraining the amateur from using too much power, say, anything above 1 K.W.

The wave length of the amateur wireless station should also be regulated in order that only wave lengths from a few metres up to 200 could be used. Wave lengths of from 200 to 1,000 metres, the amateurs should not be allowed to use, but they could use any wave length above 1,000. If this is done, all interference with Government, as well as commercial station, will be done away with and the wireless situation will then be the same as to-day. The amateurs will have the same liberty and perhaps greater liberty than today, and complaints against them from Government or Commercial stations will cease automatically.

Modern Electrics has prepared a very comprehensive article which will be published in the next issue showing just what equipment the amateur can use to keep from interfering with Government and Commercial stations, and there is no doubt that this article will, in a great measure, prevent a lot of future mischief.

It is significant that none of the other periodicals, who always shout that they have the interests of the amateur at heart, appeared to know anything about the Alexander bill, nor did any of them take any steps to serve their readers.

Modern Electrics has been the first in the wireless field and will continue to serve the wireless amateur and the independent wireless interests in the future, as in the past.