
HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4036

State of Washington 54th Legislature 1996 Regular Session

By Representatives Patterson, Reams, Stevens, Brown, McMahan, Elliot, Backlund, Robertson, D. Schmidt, Mulliken and Johnson

Read first time 01/12/96. Referred to Committee on Energy & Utilities.

1 TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES, IN
2 CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

3 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
4 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
5 represent and petition as follows:

6 WHEREAS, On average, a child in the United States is exposed to
7 twenty-seven hours of television each week and some children are
8 exposed to as much as eleven hours of television each day; and

9 WHEREAS, The average American child watches eight thousand murders
10 and one hundred thousand acts of other violence on television by the
11 time the child completes elementary school; and

12 WHEREAS, By the age of eighteen years, the average American
13 teenager has watched two hundred thousand acts of violence on
14 television, including forty thousand murders; and

15 WHEREAS, On several occasions since 1975, the Journal of the
16 American Medical Association has alerted the medical community to the
17 adverse effects of televised violence on child development, including
18 an increase in the level of aggressive behavior and violent behavior
19 among children who view it; and

1 WHEREAS, The National Commission on Children recommended in 1991
2 that producers of television programs exercise greater restraint in the
3 content of programming for children; and

4 WHEREAS, A report of the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, dated
5 May 1993, indicates that there is an irrefutable connection between the
6 amount of violence depicted in the television programs watched by
7 children and increased aggressive behavior among children; and

8 WHEREAS, It is a compelling national interest that parents be
9 empowered with the technology to block the viewing by their children of
10 television programs whose content is overly violent or objectionable
11 for other reasons; and

12 WHEREAS, Technology currently exists to permit the manufacture of
13 television receivers that are capable of permitting parents to block
14 television programs having violent or otherwise objectionable content;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the United
16 States Congress adopt legislation that provides a rating code for
17 violence and other objectionable content on television. This
18 legislation should require that televisions be equipped with circuitry
19 designed to enable viewers to block the display of channels during
20 particular time slots and enable viewers to block display of all
21 programs with a common rating.

22 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
23 transmitted to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United
24 States and each member of Congress from the State of Washington.

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