

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8042

As of February 3, 2004

Brief Description: Requesting a ban on television advertising of violent video and computer games.

Sponsors: Senators Hargrove, Stevens, Carlson, B. Sheldon, Spanel and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Children & Family Services & Corrections: 2/4/04.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Staff: Lilah Amos (786-7429)

Background: The video gaming industry markets a variety of violent, realistic, and interactive video and computer games which can be purchased from stores or downloaded from the internet. Concern exists that viewing entertainment violence and participating in that gaming violence, particularly during the role-playing inherent in computer and video games, can lead to increases in aggressive attitudes and behaviors in children and has in the past preceded episodes of tragic homicidal violence.

The video game industry has established a rating system for video and computer games. These ratings reflect the notion that certain violent video and computer games are not suitable for children to view due to graphic depictions of sex and/or violence. The ratings are "Early Childhood," "Everyone," "Teen," "Mature," "Adults Only," and "Rating Pending."

Television advertisements of "Mature" video games appear frequently on television stations which are produced for and target children under the age of 17 years. Increasingly by use of cable and satellite television systems, these advertisements are capable of reaching children at all hours.

Summary of Bill: Congress is requested to enact a prohibition against television advertising of violent video and computer games which are rated "M" (Mature) or "For Adults Only," and that President George W. Bush sign such a prohibition into law. The Memorial must be transmitted to President Bush, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the state of Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.