
HOUSE BILL 2178

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2005 Regular Session

By Representatives Dickerson, McCune and McDermott

Read first time 02/22/2005. Referred to Committee on Juvenile Justice & Family Law.

1 AN ACT Relating to violent video and computer games; adding a new
2 section to chapter 4.24 RCW; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

5 (1) The graphic depictions of violence against others in video and
6 computer games are becoming more disturbingly realistic, especially
7 with the sophisticated advancements in technology;

8 (2) Some video and computer games give the player points or
9 otherwise reward or encourage the player to assault, rape, torture, and
10 kill other characters;

11 (3) Some of these games contain graphics of torture, sexual
12 assault, and killing of women, persons of color, and law enforcement
13 officers;

14 (4) These games choreograph violence in a stylized and romanticized
15 way that encourages children and adolescents to associate violence and
16 killing with pleasure, entertainment, feelings of achievement, and
17 personal empowerment;

18 (5) Studies show a correlation between exposure to violent video
19 and computer games and hostile behavior. Children and adolescents who

1 spend hours playing these video games can become desensitized to
2 violence against others, and such games can be a factor in creating
3 conditions that lead to actual violence;

4 (6) Throughout the country, law enforcement officers report that
5 offenders committing violent crimes admit that they are intentionally
6 copying the types of violent acts they play out in video or computer
7 games. There have been accounts reported in the media in which violent
8 offenders boast of the similarity between their crimes and the games;
9 and

10 (7) Manufacturers and retailers of these games are aware of the
11 inappropriateness of violent video and computer games for children.
12 Manufacturers and retailers are also aware of the studies and reports
13 regarding the effects of these violent video and computer games on
14 adolescents.

15 The legislature declares that manufacturers and retailers of these
16 games should do their part in taking responsibility when individuals
17 copy in real life the violence they learn from these violent video and
18 computer games. Therefore, the legislature intends to create a private
19 cause of action against manufacturers and retailers of violent video
20 and computer games.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 4.24 RCW
22 to read as follows:

23 A person may maintain an action for personal injury or wrongful
24 death against a manufacturer or retailer of violent video or computer
25 games if the manufacturer or retailer has distributed, sold, or rented
26 a violent video or computer game to a person under the age of seventeen
27 and the game was a factor in creating conditions that assisted or
28 encouraged the person to cause injury or death to another person.

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