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By Representatives Patterson, Chandler, Sheahan, Brown, Campbell, Shin, Karahalios, Cothorn, Dorn, Conway, Romero, Basich, B. Thomas, Stevens, Pruitt, Johanson, Wineberry, King, Brough, L. Johnson, Quall and H. Myers

Read first time 01/12/94. Referred to Committee on Energy & Utilities. Rereferred to Committee on Education.

1 TO THE HONORABLE BILL CLINTON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND
2 TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

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

8 WHEREAS, Violence and aggressive behavior in American society has
9 dramatically increased in the last four decades, especially among our
10 children and young people; and

11 WHEREAS, The amount of violence on television has reached epidemic
12 levels, with the American Psychological Association estimating that a
13 child witnesses 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of violence on
14 television before finishing elementary school; and

15 WHEREAS, The National Institute of Mental Health, the Centers for
16 Disease Control, the American Medical Association, the American Academy
17 of Pediatrics, the American Psychological Association, and many
18 independent researchers all agree that viewing excessive levels of
19 violence on television increases aggression in many children; and

20 WHEREAS, Advance television and cable technologies will allow for
21 the expansion of channel capacity to levels that will make it

1 increasingly difficult for parents who want to protect their children
2 from televised violence; and

3 WHEREAS, The technology currently exists to equip television sets
4 at a nominal cost to permit parents to electronically block individual
5 programs they consider too violent for their children. However, this
6 technology will only be effective if (1) all television programmers
7 send a violence rating system electronically with the program signal,
8 and (2) parents are able to block out automatically all programs with
9 ratings that they consider to be unacceptable for their children; and

10 WHEREAS, This technology would allow parents to substantially
11 reduce the amount of violence that their children witness without
12 infringing upon the Constitutional safeguards of the First Amendment;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that:

14 The United States Congress and President Bill Clinton amend The
15 Communication Act of 1934 to require that televisions sold in the
16 United States be equipped with circuitry designed to enable viewers to
17 block out channels, programs, and time slots, and to enable viewers to
18 block out all programs with a common violence rating;

19 The Cable Act of 1992 be amended to require that all cable
20 companies provide their customers, at no cost, electronic equipment
21 with this same capability;

22 The federal government or an independent organization develop a
23 violence rating system for television programming, and the violence
24 rating be electronically broadcast with all broadcast, satellite, and
25 cable programming; and

26 The federal government take other appropriate actions to reduce the
27 level of violence on television.

28 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
29 transmitted to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the United
30 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
31 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of
32 Washington.

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