

103^D CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 973

To require the Federal Communications Commission to evaluate and publicly report on the violence contained in television programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 18 (legislative day, APRIL 19), 1993

Mr. DORGAN (for himself and Mr. CONRAD) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To require the Federal Communications Commission to evaluate and publicly report on the violence contained in television programs, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Television Violence Re-
5 port Card Act of 1993”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) Television is bringing an epidemic of vio-
9 lence into the American home. Twenty-five percent

1 of prime-time television shows contain “very violent”
2 material, according to the National Coalition on Tel-
3 evision Violence.

4 (2) This epidemic has been growing steadily
5 worse. Prime time violence tripled during the 1980’s,
6 the American Academy of Pediatrics reports.

7 (3) Shows aimed at children are especially vio-
8 lent. According to a University of Pennsylvania
9 study, children’s programming contains over 30 vio-
10 lent acts per hour, an all-time record.

11 (4) The average child watches 8,000 murders
12 and 100,000 acts of violence on television before fin-
13 ishing elementary school .

14 (5) There is overwhelming evidence that chil-
15 dren tend to imitate the behavior they see on tele-
16 vision. The National Institute of Mental Health
17 states that violence on television leads to aggressive
18 behavior by children and teenagers who watch vio-
19 lent television programs.

20 (6) The growing international media market
21 has put a premium on “action”-type television shows
22 that require little verbal translation, making violence
23 a major United States export to the rest of the
24 world.

1 tial percentage of the households that subscribe to
2 cable television service nationally), during that
3 week's prime-time and Saturday morning time slots;
4 and

5 (2) ensure that at least one of the weeks se-
6 lected under paragraph (1) in any calendar year is
7 a sweeps week.

8 (c) VIOLENCE RATINGS OF PROGRAMS AND SPON-
9 SORS.—After evaluating the television programs described
10 in subsection (c), and in accordance with criteria estab-
11 lished by the regulations promulgated under this section,
12 the Commission shall—

13 (1) rate those programs in terms of the extent
14 of the violence they contain; and

15 (2) rate program sponsors in terms of the ex-
16 tent to which they sponsor television programs that
17 contain a high degree of violence.

18 (d) REPORT CARD.—In the quarter following any
19 quarter for which the Commission has made evaluations
20 under this section, the Commission shall publish in the
21 Federal Register a Television Violence Report Card that
22 reports the violence ratings by the Commission under sub-
23 section (c) of the programs so evaluated and the sponsors
24 of those programs.

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