

104TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 772

To provide for an assessment of the violence broadcast on television, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 9 (legislative day, MAY 1), 1995

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

A BILL

To provide for an assessment of the violence broadcast on television, 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 1995”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) Three out of every four people in the United
9 States consider television programming too violent,
10 according to a 1993 poll by Electronic Media.

1 (2) Three Surgeon Generals, the National Insti-
2 tute of Mental Health, the Centers for Disease Con-
3 trol, the American Medical Association, the Amer-
4 ican Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Psy-
5 chological Association have concurred for nearly 20
6 years as to the deleterious effects of televised vio-
7 lence on children.

8 (3) In conjunction with other societal factors
9 such as poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, and poor
10 education, the depiction of violence in all forms of
11 media contribute to violence in United States soci-
12 ety.

13 (4) The entertainment industry is becoming in-
14 creasingly sensitive to public sentiment against ex-
15 cessive violence in television programming. A recent
16 survey of 867 entertainment executives by U.S.
17 News and World Report and the University of Cali-
18 fornia in Los Angeles reveals the following:

19 (A) 59 percent of such executives consider
20 violence on television and in movies a problem.

21 (B) Nearly 9 out of 10 such executives say
22 that violence in the media contributes to the
23 level of violence in the United States.

24 (C) 63 percent of such executives believe
25 that the entertainment media glorify violence.

1 (D) 83 percent of such executives believe
2 that the debate on excessive violence in tele-
3 vision programming has affected the program-
4 ming decisions made by the broadcast television
5 industry.

6 (5) The broadcast television and cable program-
7 ming industries have undertaken efforts to decrease
8 violence on television through joint standards on vio-
9 lence, implementation of an advance parental advi-
10 sory plan, and the establishment of independent ef-
11 forts to monitor the incidence of violence in tele-
12 vision programming, analyze the portrayal of vio-
13 lence in network television programming and in
14 other forms of video programming, and analyze the
15 trends and changes in the treatment of violent
16 themes by the media.

17 (6) The American Psychosocial Association
18 finds that approximately 1,000 studies and reports
19 on the effects of violence on television have been
20 published since 1955. The accumulated research
21 clearly demonstrates a correlation between the view-
22 ing of violence on television and aggressive behavior.

23 (7) To the fullest extent possible, parents and
24 consumers should be empowered to choose which tel-
25 evision programs they consider appropriate for their

1 children and which programs they consider too vio-
2 lent.

3 **SEC. 3. TELEVISION VIOLENCE REPORT CARDS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Commerce shall,
5 during fiscal years 1996 and 1997, make grants directly
6 to one or more not-for-profit entities for purposes of per-
7 mitting such entities to carry out in such fiscal years an
8 assessment of the violence in television programming. The
9 amount of the grants shall be sufficient to permit such
10 entities to carry out the assessment.

11 (b) ASSESSMENT.—(1) In carrying out an assessment
12 under this section, an entity shall—

13 (A) review current television programs (includ-
14 ing programs on broadcast television, on independ-
15 ent television stations, and on cable television) in
16 order to determine the nature and extent of the vio-
17 lence depicted in each program;

18 (B) prepare an assessment of the violence de-
19 picted in each program that describes and cat-
20 egorizes the nature and extent of the violence in the
21 program; and

22 (C) take appropriate actions to make the as-
23 sessment available to the public.

24 (2) An entity shall carry out a review under para-
25 graph (1)(A) not less often than once every 90 days.

1 (3) In making an assessment public under paragraph
2 (1)(C), an entity shall identify the sponsor or sponsors of
3 each television program covered under the assessment.

4 (c) GRANT PROCEDURES.—The Secretary shall de-
5 termine the entities to which the Secretary shall make
6 grants under this section using competitive procedures.
7 Applications for such grants shall contain such informa-
8 tion as the Secretary may require to carry out the require-
9 ments of this Act.

10 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
11 authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be nec-
12 essary to make the grants required under this section.

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