

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Representative Maximo B. Rodriguez, Jr.

House Bill No. 6818

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Presidential Decree No. 1986, which creates the Movie and the Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB), does not authorize the MTRCB to prescribe ratings for violence in television programming and to promulgate rules for signals containing specifications for blocking violent programming in apparatuses with such technical capability. Neither does Republic Act No. 7925, also known as the Public Telecommunications Policy Act of the Philippines, provide such measures for broadcast operations of public communication entities.

On several occasions since 1975, the journal of the American Medical Association has alerted the medical community to the adverse effects of televised violence on child development, including an increase in the level of aggressive behavior among children who view it. A report dated May 1993 of the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation in the United States, reveals that there is an irrefutable connection between the amount of violence depicted in the television program watched by children and increased aggression among them.

This bill prescribes television violence rating codes for children and prohibits violent programming on television during certain hours. For those apparatuses equipped with technical capability for blocking signals, the bill authorizes the MTRCB and the NTC to jointly prescribe rules for transmission.

The approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

MAXIMO B. RODRIGUEZ, JR.

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AN ACT

LIMITING EXPOSURE OF CHILDREN TO VIOLENT PROGRAMMING ON TELEVISION AND CABLE SYSTEMS

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Short Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Children's Media Protection Act."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is the policy of the state to protect the welfare of children by limiting their exposure to violent programming on television and cable systems.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. For purposes of this Act:

Cable Operator - any person or group of persons who (a) provides cable service over a cable system and directly or through one or more affiliates owns a significant interest in such cable system, or (b) who otherwise controls or is responsible for, through any arrangement, the management and operation of such a cable system;

Cable System - any facility consisting of a set of closed transmission paths and associated signal generation, reception, and control equipment that is designed to provide cable service which includes video programming and which is provided to multiple subscribers within a community, but such terms does not include (a) a facility that serves only to retransmit the television signals of 1 or more television broadcast stations; (b) a facility that serves only subscribers in 1 or more multiple units dwelling under common ownership, control management, unless such facility or facilities use any public right-of way, (c) a facility of a common carrier, except to the extent such facility is used in the transmission of video programming directly to subscribers; or (d) any facility of any electric utility used solely for operating its electric utility system.

Programming - includes advertisement but does not include newscast, news interviews, and news documentaries.

Public Telecommunications Entity - any person, firm, partnership or corporation, government or private, engaged in the provision of telecommunications services to the public for compensation.

SEC. 4. Establishment of Television Violence Rating Code. - The Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) and the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) shall, jointly prescribe, in consultation with television broadcasters, cable operators, concerned non-government organizations for children and interested individuals from the private sector, rules for the transmission by television broadcast systems and cable systems of signals containing specifications for blocking violent programming.

SEC. 5. Elimination of Violent Programming on Television During Certain Hours. The MTRCB and the NTC shall, within 30 days from the effectivity of this Act, pass rules

and regulations prohibiting the broadcast on commercial television and public telecommunications entities, including the broadcast by cable operators, from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. inclusive, of programming that contains very violent scenes for children in accordance with the rating code established pursuant to the preceding paragraph.

SEC. 6. Separability Clause. If any provision or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 7. Repealing Clause. Any law, presidential decree, or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule of regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provisions of this Act, is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SEC. 8. Effectivity Clause. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,