

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 94

Session of 2007

INTRODUCED BY WATERS, BISHOP, BLACKWELL, FREEMAN, GIBBONS, HERSHEY, JAMES, KIRKLAND, MELIO, MYERS, PALLONE, READSHAW, STABACK, STERN, WALKO, YOUNGBLOOD AND SIPTROTH, MARCH 6, 2007

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, JUNE 26, 2007

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the ~~House Children and Youth Committee~~ JOINT STATE <—
2 GOVERNMENT COMMISSION TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE to
3 investigate the effects of violent interactive video games ~~on~~ <—
4 ~~the children of this Commonwealth.~~ IN CONTEXT WITH ALL OTHER <—
5 MEDIA FORMS CHILDREN ARE EXPOSED TO IN THIS COMMONWEALTH.

6 WHEREAS, Within the last ten years the video game market,
7 particularly the use of home video game systems, has exploded
8 throughout this Commonwealth and the nation; and

9 WHEREAS, Video games are available to children not only at
10 traditional places of business specializing in amusement but
11 also through a variety of retail outlets and magazine sales for
12 home use and by communication on the Internet; and

13 WHEREAS, Improvements to the picture, speed and resolution of
14 the new age of video games have made the depiction of
15 characters, places and events contained in the games amazingly
16 realistic; and

17 WHEREAS, Some, but not all, video games contain graphic and
18 repeated scenes of violence which include decapitation,

1 bloodshed, dismemberment, killing and death by the use of lethal  
2 weapons or hand-to-hand combat; and

3 WHEREAS, The General Assembly recognizes that violent crime  
4 is a serious and persistent problem in our society, especially  
5 among our youth; and

6 WHEREAS, THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION HAS CONDUCTED <—  
7 RESEARCH DEMONSTRATING THAT THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA PLAY AN  
8 IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ATTITUDES, EMOTIONS, SOCIAL  
9 BEHAVIOR AND INTELLECTUAL FUNCTIONING; AND

10 WHEREAS, THERE ARE PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES WHICH POINT OUT THAT  
11 EXPOSURE TO VIOLENT MEDIA INCREASES TENDENCIES TO RESOLVE  
12 MATTERS IN VIOLENT WAYS; AND

13 WHEREAS, The General Assembly further recognizes that, as  
14 confirmed by current scientific data, the repeated exposure to  
15 graphic violence and participation in violent interactive games  
16 may contribute to violent behavior by our youth and desensitizes  
17 them to acts of violence; and

18 ~~WHEREAS, Information regarding the content of graphic <—  
19 violence in movies and television programs as well as the lyrics  
20 of music is provided to consumers and parents so that they may  
21 make choices concerning the depiction of violence and whether  
22 they elect to have their children exposed to violent content;~~

23 WHEREAS, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE CURRENTLY RATING SYSTEMS FOR <—  
24 TELEVISION, MOTION PICTURES AND VIDEO GAMES, THE AMOUNT AND  
25 INTENSITY OF VIOLENCE TO WHICH CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS ARE  
26 EXPOSED HAVE INCREASED RATHER THAN DECREASED OVER THE LAST  
27 DECADE; AND

28 WHEREAS, THERE ARE CONSTITUTIONAL RESTRICTIONS ON STATE  
29 REGULATION OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA SINCE THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY HAS  
30 STRUCK DOWN OTHER LOCAL ORDINANCES AND STATE LAWS ADDRESSING

1 VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE LAWS VIOLATE THE  
2 FIRST AMENDMENT OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION, THE  
3 COMMONWEALTH SHOULD REDOUBLE ITS EFFORTS TO DEVELOP SOLUTIONS TO  
4 THIS PROBLEM WITHIN CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS; therefore be it

5 ~~RESOLVED, That the Speaker of the House of Representatives~~ <—  
6 ~~direct the House Children and Youth Committee to investigate the~~  
7 ~~effects of violent interactive video games on the children of~~  
8 ~~this Commonwealth; and be it further~~

9 ~~RESOLVED, That the committee be authorized to hold hearings,~~  
10 ~~take testimony and make its investigations at such places as it~~  
11 ~~deems necessary in this Commonwealth; and be it further~~

12 ~~RESOLVED, That the committee be authorized to issue subpoenas~~  
13 ~~under the hand and seal of its chairman commanding any person to~~  
14 ~~appear before the committee and to answer questions touching~~  
15 ~~matters properly being inquired into by the committee and to~~  
16 ~~produce such books, papers, records and documents as the~~  
17 ~~committee deems necessary; and be it further~~

18 ~~RESOLVED, That subpoenas be servable upon any person and have~~  
19 ~~the same effect as subpoenas issued out of the courts of this~~  
20 ~~Commonwealth and that any person that willfully neglects or~~  
21 ~~refuses to testify before the committee or to produce any books,~~  
22 ~~papers, records or documents be subject to the penalties~~  
23 ~~provided by the laws of this Commonwealth in such cases; and be~~  
24 ~~it further~~

25 ~~RESOLVED, That each member of the committee have power to~~  
26 ~~administer oaths and affirmations to witnesses appearing before~~  
27 ~~the committee; and be it further~~

28 ~~RESOLVED, THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DIRECT THE JOINT~~ <—  
29 ~~STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE TO~~  
30 ~~INVESTIGATE THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENT INTERACTIVE VIDEO GAMES ON~~

1 THE CHILDREN OF THIS COMMONWEALTH; AND BE IT FURTHER

2 RESOLVED, That the ~~committee~~ TASK FORCE report to the House ←

3 of Representatives on its activities, findings and

4 recommendations within 180 days of the adoption of this

5 resolution.