



For Immediate Release

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Postcard to Margaret Spellings: “Thanks!”

Washington—Congressman Joe Pitts (R, PA-16) today thanked Education Secretary Margaret Spellings for criticizing PBS’ use of taxpayer funds on the creation of an episode of the show “Postcards from Buster.” Secretary Spellings rightly singled out material in the episode “Sugartime!” that violated the intent Congress had in appropriating funds for the program.

“It’s inappropriate to use taxpayer money to propagandize children – doubly so when it comes to sexual politics,” said Congressman Pitts. “The children watching this program are too young to enter the debate over whether lesbians make good parents or not. Let’s leave that to the News Hour with Jim Lehrer.

“I’d like to thank Secretary Spellings for taking a stand too few are willing to make. Her principled stand is based on the expectations parents have for publicly funded programming and the intent Congress had in spending the money. She should be commended for her leadership, and commitment to this nation’s families and to fiscal responsibility,” said Congressman Pitts.

“Sugartime!” features two lesbian couples in focusing on farm life and maple sugaring, according to media reports. PBS has decided not to air the episode.

Production of the show is funded through the “Ready to Learn” program at the Department of Education designed to help children learn through television. Secretary Spellings cited the law in objecting to the episode, saying that it did not give top attention to “research-based educational objectives, content and materials.”

“Many parents would not want their young children exposed to the lifestyles portrayed in the episode,” Secretary Spellings wrote in a letter sent Tuesday to Pat Mitchell, president and chief executive officer of PBS. She went on to say that “you can be assured that in the future the Department will be more clear in its expectation for any future programming that it funds.”

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