

## (June 14, 2007) Introduction of the Family and Consumer Choice Act of 2007

We are here today to announce the introduction of The Family and Consumer Choice Act of 2007, a bipartisan bill that will give parents a new option for protecting their children from indecent TV programming, while not limiting anyone's viewing choices.

Many Americans don't like some of the things they see or hear on TV.

Sixty-eight percent of Americans say there is too much violence on TV, and sixty-six percent say there is too much sex. But the greatest concern is for our children.

Parents are worried that their children are bombarded by obscene, indecent, and violent programming. Research has demonstrated some of the negative impact that TV viewing can have on kids, such as the link between exposure to violent programming and an increase in a child's aggressive behavior. With American children between 2 and 17 watching - on average - over 3 hours of television per day, parents are asking for help. The Family and Consumer Choice Act is a logical solution.

Under this act, cable, satellite, and other multichannel providers will be required to choose one of three family-friendly options.

Option 1, they can apply the same indecency rules that cover broadcast channels, to the channels included on the expanded basic tier. While this is not a perfect solution, it would clean up what is offered in the basic package of programming and give programmers an incentive to stop producing indecent material for airing when children are likely to be watching.

Option 2, providers can offer subscribers a real "family tier" that includes all of the channels included in the expanded basic tier, minus those that are not child-appropriate. Though providers talk about offering a family friendly tier, the option they give often seems designed to fail. For example, under most family tier options, a subscriber is not able to get popular sports channels or some popular news channels. Under our bill, a family tier would be just that: family-appropriate channels that cater to all family members.

Option 3, providers can implement an opt-out a la carte system. With this choice, families would have the ability to call their provider and say, "I don't want my MTV." After this request, the

provider would have to do two things:  
block that channel from going into that household and lower the monthly bill accordingly, based on the cost of that channel to the provider.

These three options are not new. They have been talked about for years, but I believe the momentum is building for change. I applaud Chairman Martin for making this issue a priority. I am happy that he is able to join us today and we will hear from him in a few minutes, along with representatives from some of the wide array of groups supporting this measure.

While there is no doubt that parents are the first line of defense in protecting their kids, clearly they need more help. The Family and Consumer Choice Act provides this help, without limiting anyone's choices, and without imposing a single, one-size-fits-all mandate on providers. It is time for Congress to act for America's families.