



Office of Representative Heath Shuler

Representing North Carolina's Eleventh Congressional District

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Rep. Shuler Announces Effort to Create Family Friendly T.V. Choices *Bill Would Help Parents Protect Children from Indecent Programs*

Washington, D.C. – Representative Heath Shuler joined with colleagues from both sides of the aisle this afternoon to provide parents with more options in protecting their children from obscene and violent programming by announcing the introduction of the Family Choice Act of 2007.

“As the parent of two small children I understand how difficult it can be to monitor every minute of a child’s television viewing. This task is made even more difficult as the number of channels available by cable or satellite continues to grow,” said Rep. Shuler. “This bill provides families with acceptable programming, without imposing burdensome one-size-fits-all mandates on providers.”

A poll done by the AP and Ipsos in late 2005 showed that 66% of Americans say there is too much sex on TV, and 68% say there is too much violence. Yet, few options are available from cable or satellite providers to parents who are attempting to shield their young children from the most egregious violent and obscene television programs.

The Family Choice Act would give parents the ability to protect their children from indecent programming on television by requiring cable and satellite providers to follow one of three policies:

- Apply broadcast indecency standards to their programming between 6 a.m. and 10 pm;
- Offer an opt-out a la carte programming option, such that any channel a subscriber does not want to receive will be blocked, and the subscriber will be provided with a credit on their bill for the channels blocked; or
- Allow subscribers to choose a “family tier” of programming.

The “family tier” of programming would include all channels within the Expanded Basic Tier, except those stations that have programming unsuitable for children between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. (programs rated TV-Mature or TV-14), unless that programming is a news program or live sporting event.

In most cases, in order to subscribe to popular cable educational, news, and sports channels families must also pay for an additional 40-60 channels they may not want.

The Family Choice Act is being reintroduced in the 110th Congress by Reps. Dan Lipinski (D-IL) and Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE). It had been originally introduced by Rep. Lipinski in the 109th Congress.

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