

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS**

Re: *Implementation of the Child Safe Viewing Act; Examination of Parental Control Technologies for Video or Audio Programming, MB Docket No. 09-26*

I am pleased to support submittal of this Report to Congress in response to the mandate of the *Child Safe Viewing Act of 2007*. As I continue to discuss our nation's media with people throughout the country, I consistently hear from parents about the programming their children are exposed to—on broadcast television, on cable or satellite, on the Internet, on their mobile devices. Graphically violent and indecent content is all too present. While I hear many voices, there is one common refrain: parents, concerned about the many images their children see on these different modes of distribution, seek reliable, effective ways to protect their children from inappropriate content.

Media and communications technologies present all of us—especially our children—with new opportunities for learning and acquiring skills to succeed in our increasingly technology-driven society. At the same time, these advances pose large and growing challenges to parents' ability to control the content to which their children are exposed. Parents are the first line of defense in protecting their children against these barrages of violent and indecent images. But parents must be armed with information about programming content and the tools to prevent their children's exposure to objectionable content.

As required by the *Child Safe Viewing Act*, the Commission issued a Notice of Inquiry to examine advanced blocking technologies currently available across a range of media platforms and devices. The resulting Report shows that industry has responded to parents' concerns by developing several blocking and filtering options intended to aid parents in protecting their children from objectionable programming. However, the Report also reveals a multiplicity of complicated, disparate technology tools which each apply only to specific media, and, in some instances, only to specific providers. So parents are challenged to become familiar with, and learn to use, all sorts of different blocking tools and program ratings systems. No wonder parents have such a hard time! Just as bad, even when a parent successfully masters all this, his or her children often are able to find the same programming online or on their wireless devices.

For all the gains new technology tools may bring us, let's not jump to the conclusion that technology alone is necessarily the whole answer. It may very well be that we need to consider other options, beyond technology-based solutions, to halt the bombardment of our kids with objectionable programming. I am encouraged that this Report acknowledges that the record compiled so far fails to address all key questions when it comes to protecting children in the evolving digital media marketplace. I want to make sure this acknowledgment receives the attention it merits. The Commission will be pursuing this issue further with a subsequent Notice of Inquiry. The Commission, the Congress, and all of us as citizens have more work to do before we understand all the myriad causes underlying the decline of child-friendly programming standards. In the final analysis, it may be that other tools—a voluntary code of conduct, a Commission rule, a federal statute—may be needed to meet the goals of true child safe viewing.

I am grateful to Congress for providing the opportunity for the Commission to begin serious inquiry into these important questions. I particularly thank Senator Mark Pryor and his colleagues for their leadership in bringing these issues to the fore. I also commend FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski for his leadership in bringing this Report to Congress. It is my hope and expectation that the Commission will continue to work towards a comprehensive solution that will do an effective job in protecting America's children.