

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER MEREDITH A. BAKER**

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

One of the most important and demanding jobs is that of a parent. The barrage of indecent, violent or otherwise objectionable programming to which our children have access can present a daunting parenting challenge. Because extreme images and words have a powerful influence on the behavior of our children, parents must have the tools to allow them to identify harmful content so that they can protect their families. Recent surveys reveal a low rate of V-chip use—according to a 2007 study by the Kaiser Family Foundation, only about 16 percent of parents have used this technology.

With the emergence of additional “new” media—such as advanced wireless devices and the Internet—that can deliver audio and video programming to our children, the challenges confronting parents have multiplied. Now, material can be accessed on portable devices outside of the home, far from parental supervision.

I am encouraged that the Commission has engaged in this fresh, top-to-bottom review of this important subject, leading to the Report to Congress that we have adopted today. I have a long-standing interest in finding ways to protect our children from harmful material. During my previous tenure as Acting Administrator of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, we convened a working group to consider ways to shield them from inappropriate online content. As we recognized then, all parents want to keep their children safe.

Today’s Report categorizes and analyzes the sizeable record compiled in our proceeding. The Commission has heard from a wide range of commenters and compiled information about the various rating systems and blocking tools available for matter delivered over a wide variety of media platforms. We have also received comments on how we can encourage the development, deployment and use of improved mechanisms to assist parents. Despite the volume and breadth of the record, however, today’s Report is only the initial step in this process. As we note, there is much data that we still require, and a number of legal questions that we may need to resolve, including those involving the First Amendment and the extent of our statutory authority. I am pleased that additional proceedings are contemplated to seek out this necessary information, and I encourage all interested parties to make their views known.

While increased Commission regulation should not be the solution here, I cannot agree with those industry commenters who maintain that the *status quo* is acceptable. Parents must be provided access to reliable programming ratings information and easy to use blocking and filtering tools. Because such technologies must be improved, we need a full, collaborative effort by all stakeholders, pooling their resources and expertise. Together, we can build on the V-chip and fashion new, more technologically advanced mechanisms to enable parents to protect their children from harmful content over any platform. In light of the current level of V-chip use, we must also find ways to more effectively reach out to parents and make them familiar with these resources, so that they will become more comfortable using them.

I am pleased to vote in favor of this Report, and want to recognize the hard work and long hours logged by the Media Bureau in its preparation, as well as the valuable contributions of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, the Office of Engineering and Technology, and the Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Analysis. As a result of their efforts, the Commission is prepared to assist in the development of a new generation of parental control tools. I look forward to working in this effort with all interested parties, along with the Chairman, my fellow Commissioners and our dedicated FCC staff. Together, we can make a real difference in helping our nation's parents foster the healthy development of America's greatest resource: our children.