



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0010-2004, **Version:** *

Res. No. 10

Resolution calling on the entertainment industry and retailers to enforce the ratings system for the sale of violent video games.

By Council Members Brewer, Baez, Barron, Boyland, Clarke, Fidler, Foster, Gentile, Gioia, Jackson, Jennings, Koppell, Lopez, Nelson, Recchia, Reed, Rivera, Sanders, Seabrook, Stewart, Vann, Weprin, Quinn, Gerson, James and Gennaro

Whereas, In 2002, holiday sales represented 22.7 percent of total annual sales for retailers, according to the National Retail Federation, and a December 3, 2003 *Reuters* article noted that the video game industry consistently reports its highest sales figures during the holiday season; and

Whereas, The Entertainment Software Ratings Board has developed a system of ratings for video games based on their content and the appropriate age of the user; and

Whereas, The Entertainment Software Ratings Board has created an *M* rating for games considered too violent for use by minors; and

Whereas, A September 11, 2000 report entitled "Marketing Violent Entertainment to Children: A Review of Self-Regulation and Industry Practices in the Motion Picture, Music Recording & Electronic Game Industries," found that the video game manufacturers and retailers consistently market *M*-rated games to minors, quoting FTC Chairman Robert Pitofsky as saying, "Companies in the entertainment industry routinely undercut their own rating restrictions by target marketing violent films, records, and video games to young audiences"; and

Whereas, A June, 2002 Federal Trade Commission (FTC) report entitled "Marketing Violent Entertainment to Children: a 21-Month Follow-Up Review of Industry Practices in the Motion Picture, Music Recording & Electronic Game Industries," found that 69% of children under the age of 17 have been able to purchase games rated *M*; and

Whereas, A New York City Council investigation called "Parents Beware: Retail Stores Ignore Video Game Ratings," released on December 7, 2003, sent youths under the age of 17 to attempt to purchase *M*-rated video games at 35 stores in New York City and found that:

- a) Only 9% of all stores targeted in the study asked minors to show proof of age when attempting to purchase *M*-rated video games; and
- b) A minor was able to purchase *M*-rated games 97% of the time, nearly 30% more frequently than reported by the FTC; and

Whereas, Many parents and anti-violence groups argue that the continued use of these video games increases aggression and propensity for violence in minors; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the entertainment industry and retailers to enforce the ratings system for the sale of violent video games.