



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0263-2006, **Version:** *

Res. No. 263

Resolution calling upon the video game industry to modify its voluntary, content-based rating system to include the placing of parental advisory labels on computer and video game packaging, promotions and commercial displays.

By Council Members Brewer, Fidler, Gentile, Gonzalez, James, Palma, Sanders Jr., Vallone Jr. and Vann

Whereas, Representatives of the interactive entertainment software industry estimate that sixty percent of all Americans age six and older, or approximately 145 million people, play computer and video games; and

Whereas, The interactive entertainment software industry reported that more than 221 million computer and video games were sold in 2002; and

Whereas, The Entertainment Software Rating Board (“ESRB”), a self-regulatory body that applies and enforces ratings, advertising guidelines and online privacy principles for the interactive entertainment software industry, has created an independent and voluntary content-based rating system for computer and video games; and

Whereas, According to the ESRB’s voluntary, content-based rating system, eight of the top twenty best selling computer and video games in 2002 contained violent content, mild or strong language, or suggestive or mature sexual themes; and

Whereas, The ESRB’s voluntary, content-based rating system includes special labeling on computer and video games that provides general information about the content of such games through the use of “rating symbols” and “content descriptors”; and

Whereas, The ESRB’s “rating symbols” and “content descriptors” are unique to the interactive entertainment software industry and may be unclear to consumers and the general public; and

Whereas, The ESRB's "rating symbols" and "content descriptors" classify computer and video game content into six broad categories and twenty-six sub-categories that are not defined either on the label or at the point-of-sale, and thus may promote confusion among consumers and the general public; and

Whereas, The ESRB should refine its voluntary, content-based rating system by adopting a standard, straightforward parental advisory label for use in certain computer and video game packaging; and

Whereas, The ESRB should mimic the parental advisory program currently employed by the music and recording industry, wherein sound recordings that contain strong language or expressions of violence, sexual activity or substance abuse are identified with a plainly worded, highly visible and permanent parental advisory label; and

Whereas, The ESRB should expand the parental advisory program to include all print, radio, television and online advertising for computer and video games, and in all promotions and advertising of such games at the point-of-sale; and

Whereas, Consumers, especially minors, and the general public need greater awareness of the growing number of computer and video games that depict graphic and realistic sexual and violent content; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the city of New York calls upon the video game industry to modify its voluntary, content based rating system to include the placing of parental advisory labels on computer and video game packaging, promotions and commercial displays.

TSF
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