

## (July 27, 2006) Lipinski Introduces Bill to Give Families More Cable TV Options

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Legislation Empowers Parents to Protect Children From Indecent Programming

WASHINGTON, D.C. - On Thursday, Congressman Dan Lipinski (D-IL), joined by Congressman Tom Osborne (R-NE), announced the introduction of bipartisan legislation to empower consumers in choosing television services for their homes. H.R. 5919, The Family Choice Act of 2006 is designed to help parents deal with the increasingly troublesome problem of protecting their children from indecent programming on television.

"In today's culture, our young children are faced with a barrage of inappropriate images and messages coming into their homes," Lipinski said. "We need to help parents by giving them meaningful ways to protect their children from indecent programming, and this bill will do that."

Currently, consumers face limited choices and are forced to pay for many channels they would rather not expose their children to. For example, in order to subscribe to popular educational, news, and sports channels beyond the most basic channel lineup, they have no choice but to also pay for receiving channels such as MTV or Spike TV.

Polls show that the public is very concerned about the indecent content on television, and overwhelmingly supports increased choices in programming. A late 2005 AP/Ipsos Poll showed that 66% of Americans say there is too much sex on TV, and 68% say there is too much violence. More than three out of four prefer having an a la carte subscription option.

The Family Choice Act of 2006 would empower parents to protect children from indecent programming on television by requiring any multichannel video programming distributor (cable or satellite provider) to do one of the following:

- Apply broadcast indecency standards to their programming between 6 am and 10 pm;
- Offer an opt-out a la carte programming option, such that any channel a subscriber does not want to receive (with some exceptions) will be blocked, and the subscriber will be provided with a credit on their bill for the channels they block; or

- Allow subscribers to choose a family tier of programming; a family tier is defined to include all the channels in the Expanded Basic Tier, except those that have programming unsuitable for children between 6am and 10pm (programs rated TV-Mature or TV-14), unless that programming is a news program or live sporting event.

"It is clear that parents want help," said Lipinski. "They need new options and they need meaningful choices. This legislation will empower parents by giving them real choices for family-friendly programming. And it does so without imposing a single, one-size-fits-all mandate on providers. It is a common-sense solution."

Congressman Lipinski was joined at the press conference by Rep. Tom Osborne (R-NE) who is a cosponsor of the bill, and by representatives of three groups who spoke in support of the legislation - Brent Bozell, President of the Parents Television Council, Lanier Swann, Director of Government Relations at Concerned Women for America, and Jeannine Kenney, Senior Policy Analyst for the Consumers Union.