

**RESOLUTION URGING PARENTAL OVERSIGHT  
OF CHILDREN WATCHING MOVIES**

1998 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

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A RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE ENCOURAGING PARENTS TO EXERCISE INCREASED RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN FROM FILMS INAPPROPRIATE FOR THEIR AGE; AND URGING PARENTS TO WORK WITH THEATER OWNERS AND OPERATORS TO ENSURE THAT ATTENDANCE POLICIES ON AGE-RESTRICTED FILMS ARE PROPERLY ENFORCED.

*Be it resolved by the Senate of the state of Utah:*

WHEREAS since the advent of the Motion Picture Association of America rating system in 1968, nearly every film distributed in the United States has been submitted to the Classification and Rating Administration (CARA) of the MPAA;

WHEREAS CARA assigns ratings that are designed to help parents determine a film's suitability for viewing by their children;

WHEREAS the ratings go beyond simple advice, and place restrictions on who may be admitted to a theater to view a film;

WHEREAS as co-founders of the rating system, the National Association of Theater Owners and its members are bound to enforce the restrictions, which include requiring parental accompaniment or denying admission at all times for persons under 17;

WHEREAS the National Association of Theater Owners estimates that about 85% of the theater owners in the United States subscribe to the rating system;

WHEREAS children under 17 routinely attend "R" rated movies either accompanied by

a parent or guardian, or at a theater where the restriction is not uniformly enforced;

WHEREAS studies show that when children see violence, they begin to feel it's normal to be violent, and when they see graphic portrayals of adult sexuality, they begin to believe that is how they should behave;

WHEREAS psychiatrists have documented that the behaviors of children traumatized by graphic depictions of violence and sexuality in films are similar to those witnessed in children who have been physically or sexually abused or who have lived in a war zone;

WHEREAS although parents who truly love their children would not willingly put them into those real life situations, many do not realize their children can be at risk for such trauma at the local theater;

WHEREAS the placement of age restrictions on Hollywood films made by major movie stars and directors, and the use of phrases like "adults only" and "for mature audiences" often used in the media to describe a film's intended audience, heightens its allure in the minds of youth craving to be considered "adult" or "mature";

WHEREAS parents must lead out in monitoring and curbing, where necessary, the viewing habits of their children to ensure that they are not exposed to this harmful material;

WHEREAS theater owners in Utah should assist parents by ensuring that their employees are uniformly enforcing the age restrictions their association helped to create; and

WHEREAS when parents establish standards and boundaries the family does not compromise, they fortify their children with the moral courage needed to stand firm against negative forces in society:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the state Utah urge parents to exercise increased responsibility to protect their children from the harmful effects of films inappropriate for their age.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate urge theater owners to ensure that restrictions on the attendance at films are uniformly and consistently enforced.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to the Utah Parent Teachers Association, Cinemark USA Western Region Office, Cineplex-Odeon District Office, and

**Enrolled Copy**

**S.R. 1**

Carmike Cinemas Inc.