

Rep. Waxman's March 11, 2004 statement on the House floor in opposition to H.R. 3717, "The Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act of 2004."

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. *Green*) for yielding to me.

I want to take 1 minute to say that the broadcasters have an interest in protecting the public's rights, but what are we doing about the concentration of power in the media? What are we doing about the lack of a fairness doctrine or equal time, especially at a time when we have the most important election with the political debate that ought to be honest, really fair and balanced, not just for some broadcaster to tell us it is fair and balanced when it is not? What are we doing about children's programs?

Instead of dealing with those issues, we have a bill to increase the penalties for indecency on the airwaves while the FCC is already not enforcing the penalties they have at their disposal.

I think we ought to recognize that if people feel they are doing something really important with this legislation, then I think it only opens the door to more government interference in free speech on the airwaves, and that it is somewhat hypocritical for the public to think we are doing something about the important issues in the broadcasting area when we are not even addressing, and the Republican leadership has stopped us from addressing, the concentration of the media in all these other matters.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I plan to vote no on the bill.