

California game restrictions defended

A bill that would restrict access to overly violent or X-rated video games was defended Friday as being constitutionally sound.

In a release Friday, the bill passed by the California Legislature was seen as passing muster in regards to freedom of speech and as a step needed to protect children from images they might not be able to handle maturely.

"This bill (AB 1179) is not about censorship or First Amendment issues at all," Jim Steyer of Common Sense Media said in a letter to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. "Rather, it is about protecting children."

The bill is aimed at preventing young minors from getting their hands on overly violent or sexual video games; however, Steyer said it did not ban their sale outright.

Legal scholars also agreed that the potentially harmful effects of graphic violence on young minds and emotions were compelling reasons for the state to step in and look after their welfare.

"The video game industry's suggestion that this legislation is unconstitutional is simply unfounded," Steyer said.

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