

News from U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC)

Assistant to the Democratic Leader

Ranking Member, Committee on the Budget

US House of Representatives – Washington, DC

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Spratt Votes for Broadcast Decency Act

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC) today voted for a bill to impose stiffer fines on radio and television stations that broadcast indecency. The legislation, which Spratt cosponsored, passed the House by a wide margin.

“This bill,” said Spratt, “sends the message that Americans will not tolerate indecency on the airwaves.”

The bill would increase the limit on penalties that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) can assess for indecent, obscene, or profane material – from \$27,500 to \$500,000 per incident. There would be no limit on fines for recurring incidents.

The new fines would apply to radio and television operators that hold a broadcast license or permit, or applicants for a new license, permit certificate, or other FCC authorization. It would not apply to cable and satellite television or satellite radio.

The legislation is a response to indecency on two recent broadcasts – the 2003 Golden Globe awards, in which the rock star Bono used vulgar language, and the 2004 Super Bowl, in which a halftime show by Janet Jackson and Justin Timberlake included partial nudity.

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