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Barrow Votes to Increase Fines on Broadcasters who Air “Obscene, Indecent, or Profane” Content

FCC fines could be increased by 10 times the current limit – up to \$325,000 per incident

Washington, DC – Two and a half years after Super Bowl XXXVIII’s now infamous “wardrobe malfunction” took place during the game’s nationally televised halftime show, the U.S. House of Representatives today finally voted to significantly increase the fines that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) can charge licensed TV and Radio broadcasters who air obscene, indecent, or profane content.

12th District Georgia Congressman John Barrow (D-Savannah) voted for the increased fines, calling the measure “long overdue.”

“Families in Georgia, and across the country, should be able to sit down and watch TV together without having to hear foul language or see some ‘wardrobe malfunction,’” Barrow said. “Most broadcasters do a great job of controlling the content they put on the air, but frequently, some people seem intent on stepping over the line – and the small fines on the books right now haven’t done enough to clean up their act. The increased penalties outlined in this bill are long overdue.”

The bill, **S 193** – the **Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act**, passed the House by a vote of 379 – 35. It would impose a maximum daily penalty of \$325,000 “for each violation or each day of a continuing violation.” The total amount for all fines could not exceed \$3 million. The bill passed the Senate earlier this year and now heads to the President for his signature.

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