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**End Channel One Hawking to Kids in Texas Classrooms**

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**Dan Freedman**

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The State Board of Education is scheduled to vote this week on a resolution encouraging all local school districts to remove Channel One from the public schools. The resolution should be approved, and then heeded by school districts.

Channel One is a 12-minute news program containing two minutes of advertising that school districts agree to show during daily class time in exchange for the use of audio-visual electronic equipment provided by Channel One's corporate owner. That might have seemed like a good exchange years ago when Channel One was first touted as a means to supplement districts' equipment budgets, but time and experience have shown that students and taxpayers come out short on the deal.

Channel One allows advertisers unfettered access to the captive audience of classroom students in the guise of news program sponsors. But studies show that students who watch the program and students who do not watch it do about equally well on current events tests. So it's pretty much useless as an educational tool. Students would be better served if schools incorporated relevant reading material into the curriculum to teach current events.

Young people are bombarded with advertising, but come-ons right in the schoolroom, for make-up, sodas, junk food, violent movies, videos and computer games, are particularly pernicious because they bypass any efforts parents might make to control access to such advertisements, and because they give the advertised products tacit school endorsement.

Anyone who cares about improving education should be galled by the fact that teachers are forced to interrupt whatever lesson they have planned to make way for the day's Channel One broadcast. American children already watch too much television, but they generally could stand to read more books. Channel One both subtracts from limited

instruction time and piles on more time in front of the tube. Furthermore, there is no local control over what those televised offerings might contain.

Opponents of Channel One point out a further concern: the broadcasts are heavy on pushing sugary foods and drinks. This is a problem in the United States, where the incidence of childhood obesity and diabetes in children is increasing at alarming rates.

Over the course of a school year, the amount of time taken away from classroom instruction by Channel One amounts to a full week, including a day's worth of advertising, according to Gary Ruskin, executive director Commercial Alert, a nonprofit that supports the proposed Board of Education resolution in opposition to Channel One. If time is money, Channel One is wasting millions of taxpayer dollars that would be better devoted to improving the literacy and math skills of Texas children.