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Kids Online Safety Act (S. 1409)

Academic research, media reports, and heartbreaking stories from families have shown how online platforms can have a harmful effect on children and teens: fostering body image issues, creating addictive use, promoting products that are dangerous for young audiences, and fueling bullying and other destructive behaviors. Between 2009 to 2019, depression rates for teenagers doubled. Suicide became the second leading cause of death for children ten to fourteen years old. Negative influences both from content and too much time on the web have contributed to alterations in brain development and lack of meaningful relationships.

The *Kids Online Safety Act* (KOSA) is a bipartisan effort to give parents and kids the tools, transparency, and safeguards needed to protect against online threats to children. The legislation would require that online platforms put the interests of children first, providing an environment that is safer by default.

KOSA requires social media companies to take reasonable measures to prevent:

- Encouragement of addiction-like behaviors, like limiting auto play of media or rewards for more time on platform.
- Online bullying and harassment.
- Sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Marketing of narcotics, tobacco, gambling, or alcohol.
- Access to minors' personal data.
- Viewing of a minor's location.

Parents will have more access to view and track their child's online behaviors. Social media platforms will have to provide parents with the ability to:

- Manage their child's online privacy settings.
- Restrict financial transactions.
- View amount of time spent on the platform.

To ensure that online platforms are complying with the law, they are required to perform an annual independent audit outlining their risks to minors, what steps they are taking to mitigate these risks, and whether they are in compliance with the KOSA.

KOSA has wide support from many healthcare organizations including the American Psychological Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Eating Disorders Coalition, and Mental Health America, as well as the National Center on Sexual Exploitation (NCOSE), the Heritage Foundation, America First Policy Initiative, and the American Principles Project. There are [43 Senate co-sponsors](#) and the bill has the support of the White House.