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Kids Online Safety Act (S. 1748)

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.

Eagle Forum supports the *Kids Online Safety Act* (KOSA), 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. The bill has 27 co-sponsors and has been endorsed by healthcare and advocacy organizations from across the political spectrum.

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

- Encouraging addiction-promoting features, like 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 enhanced abilities to view and track their child's online behaviors. Social media platforms will have to provide parents with the tools 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 will be required to perform an annual independent audit outlining the risks to minors, what steps they are taking to mitigate these risks, and whether they are in compliance with the KOSA.