



November 14, 2022

Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Majority Leader,

With the start of the Lame Duck session of Congress, we write to you on a topic that has already been the subject of much attention by Congress, the news media, and by families across America and that we continue to believe is of the utmost importance – protecting children and teens from online harms. Through your leadership now, Congress can secure a major win for kids and families. There are three bi-partisan bills that we believe would greatly help to achieve this critical goal and that, in our view, merit your strong support.

Before it adjourns, Congress should call up and pass the [Children and Teens' Online Privacy Protection Act](#) (S. 1628), known as **COPPA 2.0**, the [Kids Online Safety Act](#) (S. 3663), known as **KOSA**, and the [Children and Media Research Advancement Act](#) , (H.R. 2161 and S.971), known as **CAMRA**.

First, why do we believe COPPA and KOSA are so important and should be moved together?

As you know, and as both President Biden and Surgeon General Murthy have so urgently described, our nation's youth are facing a mental health crisis. There are a number of factors but it is increasingly clear that technology - in particular the widespread and frequent use of digital media and technology by children and teens, the way that social media platforms are designed and operated, and the extent to which data about children and youth are collected, shared, and manipulated - is one significant contributor to the youth mental health crisis. Committees in the House and the Senate have documented these concerns in lengthy hearings over the past two years.

Taken together, COPPA 2.0 and KOSA, both of which were passed by the Senate Commerce Committee this summer, provide important online protections that would create a safer and healthier internet for kids and teens by addressing both data privacy and harmful design. Online platforms have become so powerful because of the millions of data points they collect on users, which they use to hypertarget individuals to maximize engagement and profits. Kids and teens are particularly vulnerable to being manipulated by this targeting because their brains are still developing. This makes privacy legislation like COPPA 2.0 an essential step to protecting young users online. COPPA 2.0 – which would update the nearly 25-year-old children's privacy law –

would expand protections to teens under 17 years old, limit the amount of data companies can collect from kids and teens, and ban targeted advertising to kids under 13.

In addition to strengthening privacy protections for youth, Congress should also require companies to design their platforms with young people's health and well-being in mind. KOSA achieves this important goal by imposing a duty of care on covered online platforms to take action when their platforms are harming young users, such as when their algorithms amplify harmful content promoting eating disorders, self-harm, and suicidal ideation. The bill also requires companies to provide parental and minor safeguards and tools, conduct independent audits, and provide researchers with access to company data.

As you know, America's allies in the United Kingdom, the European Union, and elsewhere, are already moving in this direction and the United States should adopt these measures as well.

Lastly, we urge you to ensure that CAMRA makes it across the finish line this year. The House approved the bill in June as part of the bi-partisan [Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-Being Act of 2022](#) (HR.7666). CAMRA would authorize funding for the NIH to conduct and support longitudinal, independent, and scientific research on how infants, children, and adolescents are impacted by exposure to and use of technology and media. The program would provide a more nuanced understanding of the cognitive, physical, and social-emotional risks and benefits of technology usage on child development and is an important complement to COPPA and KOSA as industry would begin to make adjustments to how it operates this powerful technology.

Harms to children and youth online are undeniable, and the 117th Congress has already devoted considerable time, thought, and energy on this issue. It would be irresponsible for Congress to close out this year without taking concrete action to protect kids online. It is time to secure a major win for our kids and we strongly urge you to include COPPA 2.0, KOSA, and CAMRA in must-pass legislation this year.

Thank you again for your leadership and for your attention to this critical matter. We look forward to being able to discuss this further with you and your staff.

Sincerely,

Jim Steyer
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