

HB 919 -- PROTECT YOUNG MINDS ONLINE ACT

SPONSOR: Richey

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on General Laws by a vote of 10 to 2.

This bill creates the "Protect Young Minds Online Act", which establishes requirements for Internet Service Providers to authenticate access to obscene websites when providing Internet service to subscribers. An Internet Service Provider is not liable for any penalty provided in the bill if the provider makes a good faith effort to apply a generally accepted and commercially reasonable method of compliance and the method or technology has the ability to discover and authenticate new obscene websites and fulfills the requirements of the bill.

A subscriber who knowingly provides a minor with his or her authentication in order to access an obscene website is guilty of a class A misdemeanor. The Attorney General may seek injunctive and other equitable relief against an Internet Service Provider that fails to comply with the provisions in the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill prevents exploitation of minors by limiting the potential for access. Filters and protections put in place by family and parents are not sufficient. This bill also prevents sexual violence by children as they are often sexual assault perpetrators, which may be a result of what they see online. The bill addresses and prevents cyclical issues with addiction and exploitation.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Richey; Alanda Powell; Barb Higgins; Barbara Bauer; Benjamin W. Bull, National Center on Sexual Exploitation; Concerned Women for America of Missouri; Cynthia Brown; Dan Sexson; Dana Crowder; Deborah Raymond; Diane F. Nowak; Donna Gilley; Donna Mcilroy; Gina Allen; Glenda Gibson; Jacki West; James Foley; Jennifer Gore; Jerome S. Jacobsmeyer; Joan Rawson; Joan Rawson; Judith Moorefield; Kathie Zuroweste; Kathleen Baden; Kevin Welker; Kim Schneider; Laura Hausladen; Linda Vardell; Lisa Parker; Margaret Welker; Marian Mobley; Mark Mitchell; Mary Evans; Mary Giles; Rick Giles; Mike R. Moorefield; Nancy Ferguson; Nicole Olszewski; Paula Hardin; Paula Juelich; Rebecca A. Boerner; Robert Ohlrich; Ruth Elaine Brooks; Sandra Eno; Susan Taylor; Teresa K. Stone; Tony Teoli; Tracy A. Rickert; Missouri Catholic Conference; Uriah Stark; Concerned Women for America; Christine K. White; Heidi Olson; Jerry Angelo; Kelly J. Pratt; Marykathryn Victor; Kendall Martínez-Wright; Miriam Crandall; Russ Tuttle, The Stop Trafficking Project; and Ruthie Letterman.

OPPONENTS: Caleb Pashia, Missouri Broadband Providers; Kingdom Telephone Company; Kingdom Telecommunications Inc.; AT&T; LUMEN; Paul Leykamp; and Arnie C. Dienoff provided written oppositional testimony.

OTHERS: Pam Klipsch provided written informational testimony.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.