

# IT IS TIME FOR CONGRESS TO TAKE ACTION. PASS CHILD PROTECTION LEGISLATION IN 2023!

September 6, 2023

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader Schumer and Leader McConnell,

Maya Jones\* was only 12 when she began receiving direct messages on Instagram from a man she didn't know. The man made her feel special – so when he asked her for nude photos, Maya complied. These interactions quickly escalated to meeting in person, which ultimately led to Maya being sex trafficked through Instagram. Even after she walked through the doors of a drop-in center for youth, the photos and videos her trafficker made continued to be sold online. The direct messages from sex buyers kept coming. In 2021, at the age of 15, Maya **died from an overdose of drugs** given to her by the man she met on Instagram.

Maya would still be alive today if Instagram was required to protect our youth—if products and platforms were designed with Maya's interests centered. Not to mention: it's an egregious violation of federal law and human rights that criminal child sexual abuse material (CSAM) was circulated by Instagram.

Maya's story is one of many. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's (NCMEC) CyberTipLine receives reports about multiple forms of online child sexual exploitation. CSAM comprises the largest reporting category by far. Over 99.5% of the reports received by the CyberTipline in 2022 involved incidents of suspected CSAM; there were 31.9 MILLION reports of child pornography in 2022, a 90% increase from 2019.<sup>1</sup> These are astronomical numbers—and they represent real children.

The undersigned organizations, including survivors of child exploitation and sex trafficking, urge you to bring a package of complementary child protection bills to the floor for a vote. We urge you to include **EARN IT (Eliminating Abusive and Rampant Neglect of Interactive Technologies) Act of 2023; Kids Online Safety Act of 2023; Project Safe Childhood Act; REPORT Act (Revising Existing Procedures on Reporting via Technology)** ; and **STOP CSAM Act (Strengthening Transparency and Obligations to Protect Children Suffering from Abuse and Mistreatment)**. These child protection bills are an essential remedy to the rampant online circulation of CSAM:

- [EARN IT Act \(S.1207\)](#) –Gives victims of child sexual abuse material the right to sue digital platforms that knowingly circulate criminal content; gives victims a chance to restore privacy. Establishes commission to monitor potential online harms. Gives new tools to NCMEC. Replaces "child pornography" with "child sexual abuse material" in federal law.
- [Kids Online Safety Act \(S.1409\)](#) – Creates a legally relevant “duty of care” requiring online apps and platforms to center the needs of children. Requires online tools to safeguard children automatically. Creates more transparency by allowing researchers access to data regarding algorithms for example.
- [Project Safe Childhood Act \(S.1170\)](#) – Modernizes DOJ's Project Safe Childhood Program to enhance law enforcement's response to online child sexual exploitation.
- [REPORT Act \(S.474\)](#) – Improves NCMEC's CyberTipline by requiring reporting of child sex trafficking and enticement (grooming). Extends retention period of reported material giving law enforcement more time to conduct investigations.

- [STOP CSAM Act \(S.1199\)](#) – Expands civil remedies for victims of online sexual exploitation. Requires removal of related exploitive visual depictions (REVD)

It is time to demand accountability from Big Tech. These mega-billion dollar actors are fully aware of the harms caused by their platforms and products—as we know from multiple Senate hearings in 2022. It is time that the Senate stands up to these platforms. Please bring these five vital pieces of legislation to the floor for a vote in September.

\* Tragically, this case is real, although Maya’s name has been changed to protect family.

Sincerely,

**139 Organizations & 22 Survivor Leaders**

Ashlie Bryant, Founder & CEO  
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Cynthia Jones, CEO  
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