

KATHY CASTOR
14TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY
AND COMMERCE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY
RANKING MEMBER

SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,
MANUFACTURING, AND TRADE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS
AND TECHNOLOGY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON
THE STRATEGIC COMPETITION
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES
AND THE CHINESE COMMUNIST
PARTY



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0914

WASHINGTON OFFICE:

2188 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3376

TAMPA DISTRICT OFFICE:

2130 W. MAIN STREET
TAMPA, FL 33607
(813) 871-2817

ST. PETERSBURG DISTRICT OFFICE:

136 FOURTH STREET NORTH
SUITE 201
ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33701
(727) 369-0201

castor.house.gov

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Dear friends,

Children and teenagers deserve safe online spaces that are free from manipulation and harm. For many years, I've sounded the alarm about how incessant surveillance and tracking harm young people, and about the use of manipulative design to addict kids to online platforms and repeatedly expose young people to harmful content.

Last Congress, I was proud to co-lead bipartisan bills to update youth privacy protections online. The **Kids Online Safety Act (KOSA)** was intended to give young people and parents meaningful content-neutral tools and transparency to keep young people safe online. It outlaws online practices such as manipulative marketing, amplification of harmful content and damaging design features that threaten young people online. The **Children and Teens' Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA 2.0)** would build upon current law to strengthen protections related to the online collection, use and disclosure of personal information of children and minors up to age 16. This bill addresses the excessive collection and surveillance of youth, bans harmful targeted advertising, and prompts Big Tech platforms to provide young people and parents with the tools needed to navigate the online world.

The original framework of COPPA 2.0 and KOSA gives young people a chance to avoid dangerous online content and situations that have imperiled their lives and privacy. Too many children have died by suicide after being fed repeated pro-suicide online content. Others have been cyberbullied, hurt by dangerous viral challenges or overdosed on fentanyl-laced drugs purchased on social media. Research has made it clear that our increasingly online world is unsafe for children, with popular apps pushing kids to spend unhealthy amounts of time on their devices and negatively affecting the mental health of teens. It's past time to take action, and Congress must institute safeguards to address addictive design features and require transparency of algorithms.

Addressing youth data privacy is critical, but more action is needed to counter the unscrupulous ways tech platforms addict children and steal their attention. I applaud and I am proud of the Juvenile Welfare Board's commitment to protecting children and aiding law enforcement in their valiant efforts to stop cyberbullying, human trafficking and online predators. Your efforts will safeguard children, support families and strengthen our community, and I look forward to continuing to serve as your federal partner until online practices are made safe for all kids.

Sincerely,

Kathy Castor
U.S. Representative
Florida – District 14