



Durbin & Senators Reintroduce Bill to Protect Children's Online Privacy

March 13 2019 3:00 PM

WASHINGTON – As the collection of personal information by internet companies is encroaching more and more on the privacy of every American, U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Ed Markey (D-MA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) today reintroduced legislation to strengthen online privacy protections for children when websites collect their personally identifiable information. The *Clean Slate for Kids Online Act* would give every American an enforceable legal right to demand that internet companies delete all personal information that was collected from or about the person when he or she was a child under age 13.

“Children do not realize that every click on the internet leaves a trail of personal data on them that lasts a lifetime. Companies that market online products and applications geared toward children are accumulating massive amounts of personal data, and the children never had the chance to give informed consent,” Durbin said. **“Our kids deserve the right to request a clean slate once they have grown old enough to appreciate the consequences of internet data collection, and this bill gives them that basic privacy protection.”**

“Kids’ lives are increasingly lived online, but that should not deprive them of their right to develop into healthy adults and make mistakes along the way. Today, young people’s every move is tracked across the online ecosystem, and it’s time for Congress to update the rules and put a stop to the incessant monitoring of our children. That’s why I am proud to work with Senator Durbin on the Clean Slate for Kids Online Act,” Markey said.

“The amount of information internet companies collect about everyday Americans, including children, is staggering. Each day seems to bring a new report about how these companies collect our most personal information and use it to market us products. Current law seeks to protect the safety and privacy of children by requiring parental consent before internet companies can collect their child’s

personal information,” Hirono said. “The Clean Slate for Kids Online Act builds on those protections by giving children the ability to wipe the slate clean of any information collected about them before they turned 13. It is a necessary step in ensuring that all Americans have control of their online data and privacy.”

“This bill would strengthen important online privacy protections for children, prohibiting the collection or use of their personal and private online data,” Blumenthal said. “This bill is a no-brainer—kids should be able to learn and play on the internet, without companies monitoring their activities or preying on their youth to gather and sell sensitive information. I urge my colleagues to pass this bill and stand up for our children’s right to privacy.”

“As a mom with two young sons, I know firsthand that children are extremely vulnerable when they go online,” Gillibrand said. “Congress has a responsibility to protect children’s privacy rights, and that’s why I’m proud to support the Clean Slate for Kids Act. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation, and I will always do everything in my power to protect our children and their constitutional rights.”

The Clean Slate for Kids Online Act would modify the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA), a law that governs the collection of children’s personal information by operators of internet websites and online services. COPPA requires that operators of certain websites must obtain parental consent prior to collecting or using personal information from children under age 13, and it also provides parents with some ability to limit the use of or delete information collected from their children.

Durbin’s legislation strengthens COPPA in several ways, including:

- Giving every American a broad right to have website operators delete information that was collected on them while they were under 13, even if a parent consented at the time to the data collection.
- Giving Americans the right not only to request the deletion of information that websites collected *from* them when they were kids, but also information collected *about* them when they were kids. This would cover information that websites obtained about kids from data brokers and other indirect sources.

The Clean Slate for Kids Online Act directs the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to issue regulations to require operators of websites that are covered by COPPA to (1) provide prominent notice on their website of how a person over age 13 (or a person’s legal guardian acting with the person’s knowledge and consent) can request the deletion of all personal information the operator has that was collected from or about the person

when he or she was under age 13, and (2) when requested, to promptly delete all such information and provide confirmation of the deletion to the requestor in writing. Like the current COPPA law, the *Clean Slate for Kids Online Act* would be enforced by the FTC and by state Attorneys General.