

# Durbin Introduces Bill To Protect Children's Online Privacy

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WASHINGTON – As the collection of personal information by internet companies is encroaching more and more on the privacy of every American, U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, today introduced 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.

“Every day, internet companies collect reams of personal data on Americans, including kids. But we cannot expect children to fully understand the consequences of their internet use and this collection process. Kids deserve a chance to request a clean slate once they are old enough to appreciate the nature of internet data collection, and this bill gives them that chance,” said Durbin.

*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.

Joining Durbin in introducing today’s legislation include U.S. Senators Ed Markey (D-MA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT).

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.

The *Clean Slate for Kids Online Act* is supported by Illinois PIRG, the Center for Digital Democracy, and the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood.