

# Durbin, Blumenthal, Hirono Introduce 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, and U.S. Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Mazie Hirono (D-HI) 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.

“Internet companies too often seek to profit from collecting reams of personal data on Americans, including children. It’s time to put in place some tougher rules of the road – especially when it comes to our kids, who do not fully understand the consequences of their online use,” said Durbin. “Kids deserve a chance to request a clean slate once they are old enough to appreciate the nature of internet data collection. The *Clean Slate for Kids Online Act* would give them that chance.”

“Children’s personal data shouldn’t be used to pad Big Tech’s profits. Allowing the industry to collect and monitor kids’ sensitive information is a threat to not only their privacy, but their ability to safely learn and play during their online experience,” said Blumenthal. “Our legislation allows users to take back control of private data that was collected from them as kids – an important step to protect consumers and hold Big Tech accountable for its practices.”

“Children across the country use the internet for everything from school and research to keeping in touch with friends,” said Hirono. “However, many of the websites they access are continuously collecting their data and personal information. Children deserve a fresh start once they’re old enough to understand how their data is used online. The *Clean Slate for Kids Online Act* would strengthen privacy protections for kids by enabling them to request the deletion of information collected from and about them while they were under 13-years old.”

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.

The *Clean Slate for Kids Online Act* would strengthen *COPPA* by:

- 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.

Tomorrow, the Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a [hearing](#) entitled "Protecting Our Children Online," which will examine the challenge of ensuring online child safety and privacy, with witnesses testifying to the risks, threats, and harms that children face in the online world.