

Durbin Discusses Protecting Children Online With National Center For Missing & Exploited Children

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WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, met with Michelle DeLaune, President and CEO of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), along with NCMEC General Counsel Yiota Souras, to discuss NCMEC’s Congressional appropriation and Durbin’s efforts to protect children online.

“I’ve worked hand-in-hand with Ms. DeLaune and her team since the Senate Judiciary Committee began its legislative push to protect children online earlier this year. Their support is a testament to the importance of Congressional action to hold Big Tech

accountable for its failure to protect our kids. NCMEC and its programs and services are a critical lifeline for victims, survivors, and their families. As I push to bring our bills to the Senate floor for a vote, I am proud to have NCMEC's partnership and will do whatever I can to fund their lifesaving services," said Durbin.

NCMEC was the first organization to endorse Durbin's *Strengthening Transparency and Obligations to Protect Children Suffering from Abuse and Mistreatment Act of 2023* (*STOP CSAM Act*), which was unanimously [voted](#) out of the Committee in May. The legislation cracks down on the proliferation of child sexual abuse material online by, among other things:

- Creating a civil remedy for victims harmed when Big Tech promotes or facilitates online child sexual exploitation;
- Requiring Big Tech to submit annual reports about their efforts to protect children from sexual exploitation;
- Empowering victims by making it easier for them to ask tech companies to remove child sexual abuse material and related imagery from their platforms; and
- Creating an administrative penalty for failing to comply with a removal request.

A photo from the meeting available is [here](#).

NCMEC is a private, nonprofit corporation whose mission is to help find missing children, reduce child sexual exploitation, and prevent child victimization. Last year, NCMEC's CyberTipline, which receives reports from the tech industry and the public about online child sexual exploitation, received [over 32 million reports](#).

Since the Senate Judiciary Committee's [hearing](#) on this issue in February that featured testimony from DeLaune, multiple bills have advanced out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on a bipartisan basis to help stop the exploitation of kids online, including the *STOP CSAM Act* and:

- The [EARN IT Act](#), which removes tech's blanket immunity from civil and criminal liability under child sexual abuse material laws and establishes a National Commission on Online Child Sexual Exploitation Prevention;
- The [SHIELD Act](#), which ensures that federal prosecutors have appropriate and effective tools to address the nonconsensual distribution of sexual imagery;
- The [Project Safe Childhood Act](#), which modernizes the investigation and prosecution of online child exploitation crimes; and
- The [REPORT Act](#), which combats the rise in online child sexual exploitation by instilling new measures to help strengthen reporting of those crimes to the CyberTipline.

In July, the Senate [passed](#) the *Missing Children's Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2023*, the bipartisan bill sponsored by Durbin to renew funding for the *Missing Children's Assistance Act* through Fiscal Year 2028 and update the statute concerning NCMEC.