



# Senator Harriss Bill Coincides With Safer Internet Day

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**SPRINGFIELD** - In recognition of Safer Internet Day, State Senator Erica Harriss (56th-Glen Carbon) is renewing calls to pass bipartisan legislation to protect minors from exposure to harmful and inappropriate content online by implementing age verification requirements in Illinois.



The Adult Content Age Verification Act, Senate Bill 2590, would require businesses to put in place “reasonable age verification methods” to ensure that individuals entering pornographic websites are indeed of legal age.

“Our youth are incredibly vulnerable on the internet, and they have access to a wide variety of adult content, some of which can be harmful, hurtful, and inappropriate,” said Senator Harriss. “I filed this legislation to help protect children from accessing explicit material intended for adult viewership by requiring more accountability from pornographic websites.”

A recent [report](#) found that most teens had consumed porn online and first encountered it on average at age 12. More than half were exposed accidentally, including from friends or classmates, search engine results, social media, or by clicking links, according to the report’s findings.

“Leading health organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, warn that consuming pornography as a minor can be associated with a variety of negative emotional, psychological, behavioral and physical health outcomes,” said Sen. Harriss. “My legislation puts the health of our children first, by implementing reasonable verification requirements that should be expected of businesses profiting off non-verified underaged viewers.”

Harriss’ legislation identifies the “reasonable age verification methods” a business must follow, include requiring a government-issued ID or any commercial method that relies on specific transactional data to verify the person is 18 years or older.

Businesses would be given 30 days to comply with the appropriate age verification methods. If entities fail to do so, they will be subject to civil penalties assessed by the Court. Funds from civil penalties would then be disbursed into the Cyber Exploitation of Children Fund established to help state and local law enforcement agencies develop an effective response to technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation and internet crimes against children.

Further, the bill allows the Attorney General to investigate an alleged violation against a business who publishes or distributes pornographic material to minors who have not submitted reasonable age verification.

Senator Harriss hopes to present the bill during the current legislative session now underway in Springfield.