



December 13th, 2021

The Honorable Marsha Blackburn
United States Senate
357 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Blackburn and Cortez Masto,

We, as leaders of the undersigned organizations who are dedicated to fighting against the online sexual exploitation and abuse of children (OSEAC), write to voice our strong support for the Eliminate Network Distribution (END) of Child Exploitation Act. As organizations deeply committed to child protection, we are grateful for your leadership on this important issue. We are also pleased that this legislation is both a bipartisan and bicameral effort that takes a welcome and necessary step towards strengthening current policies addressing OSEAC.

OSEAC is one of the fastest growing crimes and threats against children. The [US Sentencing Commission's October 2021 report](#), which studied child sexual abuse image producers, found that OSEAC has increased by 422% over the last 15 years. [From 2019 to 2020](#), CyberTips submitted to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) of suspected OSEAC and child sexual abuse materials (CSAM), dramatically rose from 16.9 million reports to 21.7 million reports – an increase of 28%. Some of the most recent growth can be attributed to the [Covid-19 pandemic](#), which created a perfect storm that increased children's risk of experiencing OSEAC. In the last year, the world shifted to an online environment with teleworking and remote learning, leading to internet usage among [children aged 6-12 in the U.S. increasing by about 50%](#). Unfortunately, there has also been a [rise in offender activity](#), as predators have used this as an opportunity to further target children. The funding, production, and distribution of CSAM [has increased during the pandemic](#), according to the U.S. Financial Crimes Enforcement Network and other law enforcement agencies.

The methods and platforms offenders use to exploit and abuse children are constantly evolving and adapting to the online world we live in today, forcing law enforcement, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations working to prevent and respond to OSEAC to similarly change their tactics and tools in response. However, with limited resources, United States law enforcement agencies are increasingly unable to prioritize and quickly respond to the rapidly growing number of CyberTips and proactively work cases of child sexual exploitation. This often includes being unable to begin investigations within the current 90-day timeframe that electronic communication and remote computing service providers must retain data related to CyberTipline reports.

That's why the END Child Exploitation Act is so critical. With the significant increase in CyberTipline reports in recent years, law enforcement has been overwhelmed by the scale of the problem and simply needs more time to respond to these incoming reports. By extending this timeframe from 90 days to 180 days, the bill provides a crucial solution to this problem by giving law enforcement agencies the time they need to conduct investigations and utilize the invaluable information contained in these reports. This will lead to more reports being investigated, more victims being identified and removed from exploitation, and more perpetrators being identified and prosecuted.

As a united group of leaders working on the front lines in the fight to protect children, we are proud to endorse this important legislation. We welcome the opportunity to work with you and your staff and hope that you will consider us as a useful resource for information and dialogue on online child sexual abuse and exploitation policies and programs moving forward. We thank you for giving this issue the priority, attention, and action that it deserves, and stand ready to assist you in any way we can to get this bill passed into law. Please do not hesitate to call on us for support and assistance as we work together to safeguard children.

Sincerely,

Marci A. Hamilton, Esq.
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Anne Lynam Goddard
President and CEO
ChildFund International

Lori Cohen
CEO
ECPAT-USA

Donna Rice Hughes
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CC:

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