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ATTORNEY GENERAL ANNE LOPEZ LEADS MULTISTATE EFFORT URGING CONGRESS TO PASS U.S. SENATE VERSION OF KIDS ONLINE SAFETY ACT

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HONOLULU – Attorney General Anne Lopez led a bipartisan coalition of 45 attorneys general from around the country, with a letter urging Congress to pass the Senate version of the Kids Online Safety Act (KOSA), legislation aimed at strengthening online protections for children and teens.

In the letter to congressional leadership, Attorney General Lopez expressed continued support for Senate Bill 1748, which would establish minimum safety standards for social media and gaming platforms while preserving states' authority to enact and enforce laws protecting children from online harms.

The renewed call for federal legislation follows the recently announced $17 billion multistate settlement with Meta, which requires the company to implement significant safeguards designed to protect users under 18 on Facebook and Instagram. These include daily time limits, restrictions on nighttime use, stronger protections against bullying, limits on certain potentially harmful content and enhanced parental controls.

In their letter, the attorneys general emphasized that the safeguards established through the Meta settlement, while significant, cannot provide consistent protections across the entire technology industry.

“While the Meta settlement represents a significant step forward in protecting children online, our work is far from over,” said Attorney General Lopez. “Children deserve meaningful protections regardless of which social media platform they use. Congress has an opportunity to build on the work states have already done by establishing strong, nationwide safety standards while preserving our ability to respond to emerging threats and hold companies accountable.”

The attorneys general also highlighted the importance of KOSA’s Duty of Care provision, which would establish a lasting standard for all social media and gaming platforms that extends beyond the term of the settlement. Unlike a settlement with an individual company, this requirement would adapt as technologies and platform features evolve, while preserving the states’ ability to develop and enforce additional protections against emerging online harms.

Since 2021, state attorneys general have investigated major social media platforms over concerns about addictive design features and their impacts on children’s mental health. Those investigations led to lawsuits against Meta and other companies, as attorneys general sought to hold platforms accountable for practices that allegedly harmed young users.

“Protecting children online requires a coordinated effort at both the state and federal levels,” said Attorney General Lopez. “We urge Congress to act now to establish lasting protections that put the safety and well-being of children first.”

Attorney General Lopez led the effort alongside Ohio Attorney General Andy Wilson, Tennessee Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti and Connecticut Attorney General William Tong. The letter was also signed by the attorneys general of Alabama, Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, U.S. Virgin Islands, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia and Wyoming.

A copy of the letter is available here.

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