



**STATEMENT BY JOHN F. CLARK  
PRESIDENT AND CEO  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN**

**Regarding Senate Action on Legislation to Provide Justice to Child Sex Trafficking Victims**

**March 19, 2018**

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is pleased that the United States Senate is scheduled to consider the *Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act* (H.R. 1865) this week.

H.R. 1865 includes key provisions of the *Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act* or SESTA (S. 1693) by Senators Rob Portman and Richard Blumenthal. NCMEC is a proud supporter of the SESTA legislation which makes narrowly drafted and long needed updates to the Communications Decency Act of 1996 (CDA).

NCMEC has long championed legislative efforts that will provide justice to children who have been trafficked for sex online. We believe that any final legislation must include these amendments to the CDA to clarify that there is no immunity for anyone who participates in the crime of online sex trafficking. More specifically, legislation must allow trafficking survivors to have their day in court and empower state Attorneys General to join the battle against those who are knowingly facilitating the online sex trafficking of children in their states.

We strongly urge all Senators to support a clean bill without any amendments. We are particularly concerned about two proposed amendments that would (1) create an unnecessary shield for companies attempting to filter content on their websites and (2) provide a mechanism to increase funding at the Department of Justice to investigate and prosecute website operators. After many months and careful negotiations, any additional amendments to the House passed package will create bad public policy and be a poison pill if sent back to the House.

Already, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1865 by a significant margin of 388-25, and we are pleased there is similar strong support in the Senate for this important package. We look forward to passage of the identical bill by the Senate so that it can get to the President's desk to be signed into law.

Our gratitude goes out to Senators Portman, Blumenthal and all cosponsors of SESTA for their powerful leadership on this legislation and for their ongoing support of the child survivors, their families, and the coalition of advocacy organizations who serve these survivors.