

**For Immediate Release
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**CONGRESS APPROVES INTERNET SAFETY LEGISLATION
Measure Would Help Parents and Schools to Protect Children Online**

WASHINGTON, D.C. –The United States Senate late last night approved the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, cosponsored by Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee Ranking Member Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas), Chairman Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) and 19 other cosponsors. The measure was originally introduced by Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) as standalone legislation (S.1965), and was included as part of a broadband mapping bill, S. 1492, that was approved by Congress. The measure will bring parents, industry, and teachers together to address comprehensive education for children online. The bill was approved by the Senate Commerce Committee last September and was passed by the House on Monday. It now heads to the President to be signed into law.

“As a parent, I understand the importance of keeping our children safe while using the Internet,” said Senator Hutchison. “Senator Stevens has been a vocal leader on this issue and this bill will provide parents and teachers with the tools they need to help protect and educate our children while they are online.”

“This legislation will improve online safety for children and strengthen parental control without infringing on First Amendment rights,” Senator Stevens said. “It is important to work together to keep children safe while they are online and parents play a vital role in supervising their children’s use of the Internet. The measure ensures important education for our children without the federal government in Washington, D.C. dictating the exact terms.”

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, one in seven children online (10 to 17-years-old) have received a sexual solicitation or approach over the Internet.

The Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act:

- requires schools receiving E-Rate funds to offer education regarding online

behavior, including social networking, chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response;

- creates an interagency working group to identify and encourage technologies and initiatives to help parents protect their children from unwanted content; and
- requires a national public awareness campaign to be conducted by the Federal Trade Commission.

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