

## Commerce committee passes amendment to protect kids online

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WASHINGTON D.C.— U.S. Senator Ben Ray Luján, D-N.M., a member of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, voted to advance critical legislation that will enhance and enforce online privacy protections for children and teenagers on July 27. Co-sponsored by Senator Luján, The Kids Online Safety Act empowers kids and parents to take control over kids' online experiences to better protect their health and well-being. The Children and Teens' Online Privacy Protection Act updates online data privacy rules for the 21st century and ensures both children and teenagers are protected online.

"It's clear social media will continue to be a huge part of our children and teenagers' lives, as more young Americans are forced to rely on the internet to stay connected," Luján said. "Tragically, these social media companies have capitalized on this opportunity by manipulating our personal and private data to shore up their own profits, while ignoring the consequences. That's why it's critical that Congress acts urgently to create legislative guardrails that give users control over their personal information while holding Big Tech accountable for harm to our young people's health and our democracy."

Luján has pushed social media companies to address the disparities between English speakers and Spanish speakers on their platforms in the past.

"There is significant evidence that your Spanish-language moderation efforts are not keeping pace, with widespread accounts of viral content promoting human smuggling, vaccine hoaxes, and election misinformation. Congress has a moral duty to ensure that all social media users have the same access to truthful and trustworthy content regardless of the language they speak at home or use to communicate online," Luján said.

Last year, Luján introduced legislation to hold large social media companies accountable for using computer algorithms that promote harmful and dangerous content that leads to offline violence. The senator also chaired a hearing on disrupting dangerous algorithms and participated in hearings convened by Senators Blumenthal and Blackburn, where Frances Haugen, made it clear—Congress must intervene to get real transparency from Big Tech.

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