

# Internet Sex Trafficking



*The loophole in federal law can be closed.*

These two Concurrent Resolutions, one in the House and one in the Senate, would urge Congress to close the loophole in the Federal Communications Decency Act. The Act is interpreted by federal courts to immunize from prosecution providers and users of interactive computer services such as *Backpage.com* who knowingly carry ads that offer sex with victims of sex trafficking. The bipartisan Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act (SESTA) is currently before the U.S. Senate and has garnered strong support from anti-trafficking advocates and law enforcement.

## **What anti-human trafficking leaders and law enforcement are saying about how SESTA will help combat human trafficking:**

*“This bill will help ensure justice for child sex trafficking victims and clarify remedies available to civil attorneys and state Attorneys General to assist victims in holding responsible everyone who participated in their trafficking...”* — **John Clark, President and CEO, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children**

*“Mounting evidence has made clear that... certain online service platforms are taking advantage of legal loopholes to profit off of these heinous crimes by knowingly creating or hosting content and actively engaging in conduct that collaborates with sex traffickers to facilitate the sale of minors and adults victimized by sex trafficking. The Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act of 2017 seeks to carefully close these loopholes, to support sex trafficking survivors, and to hold these bad actors accountable.”* — **Brad Myles, CEO, Polaris**

*“The Stop Enabling Sex Trafficking Act of 2017 will bring resolution to the showdown between the Communications Decency Act’s protections for certain internet businesses and the Trafficking Victims Protection Act’s human rights protections. This bipartisan legislation will restore the promise of access to justice to these victims and hold offending websites culpable for their crimes.”* — **Former Congresswoman Linda Smith, Founder and President, Shared Hope International**

*“We are encouraged by the legislation introduced today... It sends a strong signal that we will not sit idly by while Backpage, and companies like it, cozy-up to traffickers and profit from the sale of children. The victims of child sexual exploitation have waited too long for justice. This bill is an important step toward rectifying that.”* — **Carol Smolenski, Executive Director, ECPAT USA**

*“Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act addresses this issue and narrowly amends section 230 to allow states and victims to bring cases against bad actors that facilitate sex trafficking, while safeguarding the freedom of the internet.”* — **William J. Johnson, Executive Director, National Association of Police Organizations**

*“The Major Cities Chiefs Association... strongly supports any legislation that will help identify and bring to justice those in the heinous business of on-line sex trafficking. We believe the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act of 2017 will do just that.... meaningful deterrents to be implemented with passage of this measure could spare countless women and children from becoming victims of sexual predators.”* — **J. Thomas Manger, Chief of Police, Montgomery County Police Dept. and President, Major Cities Chiefs Association**

Insight

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