

The Connecticut General Assembly

House Democrats



Public Hearing Testimony Speaker:

House Democrats

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Testimony Submitted to:

The Connecticut General Assembly
Committee on Education

March 12, 2007

Hearing on Raised Bill No. 7354, An Act Concerning The Commission on Educational Technology and Virtual Instruction For Connecticut Public Schools and Internet

Co-Chairs Gaffee and Fleischmann, Senator Fonfara and Representative Genga, Senator Herlihy and Representative Hovey, and members of the Committee on Education, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Raised Bill No. 7354, An Act Concerning The Commission on Educational Technology and Virtual Instruction For Connecticut Public Schools and Internet.

First I would like to thank the Committee for addressing this important need for Connecticut which seeks to provide greater access to educational opportunities for students and teachers. I also want to commend you on your initiative to include a safety provision on safe use of the Internet.

The safety aspect of this bill is perfectly aligned with the intent of HB 5839, An Act Concerning Safe Use of the Internet. The Internet is increasingly becoming a dangerous place for young people. Although there is no substitute for a parent directly monitoring what their child sees on their computer, my hope is that the passing of this legislation will help parents feel more at ease about their children using the Internet and keep young people safe.

Here are some figures that may assist you in your discussions:

1. 90% of kids who meet an online predator in person end up being abused
2. 76% of online sexual exploitation victims are found via social networking applications
3. 75% of children are willing to share personal information online
4. Kids ages 2-11 spend an average of 9 hours and 24 minutes online per month and young people ages 15-18 spend 6.5 hours a day on related activities
5. 51% of teenage users say they go online on a daily basis
6. Nearly half of online teens post something on Web sites like Face Book or MySpace
7. One in five U.S. teens say they have received an unwanted sexual solicitation via the web
8. 81% of parents of online teens say that their children are not careful enough when giving out information about themselves online

Thank you for your time and consideration.