



Congressional Resolution Pushes Tech Industry to Develop Self-Regulatory Body to Protect Children from Harmful App Content

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The resolution also calls on tech companies to adopt user-friendly parental controls on internet-ready devices they manufacture, close loopholes that allow children to bypass parental controls, build in age-based default safety settings and provide for app shutoff options for bedtime and school hours. It further recommends that the proposed board be comprised of industry representatives and experts in child development, child protection and internet safety.

According to Johnson and McAdams, parents deserve transparent and accurate app ratings. They suggest that many tech companies have failed to comply with “basic best business practices” in those companies’ efforts to protect minors. The resolution highlights that many of the most frequently downloaded apps include content that is not consistent with their age ratings or description. Johnson and McAdams characterize clarity in app ratings as a “critical part of social responsibility” for tech companies.

Issues related to children’s privacy remain a key area of regulatory scrutiny. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) finished [collecting comments](#) on potential updates to its implementation of the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (together with its implementing regulations, COPPA). The FTC sought public input regarding, among other topics, potential updates to the parental right to review or delete children’s information and whether there are circumstances in which general audience platforms with third-party child-directed content can rebut the assumption that all users interacting with that content are children.

The bipartisan resolution, which does not need Senate or presidential approval, would not be binding if passed. However, its passage could reflect a potential shift in Congressional attitudes with regard to the tech industry's responsibility for safeguarding children's online safety.

Categories

Children's Privacy

Federal Privacy Policy

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