



Herbert H. Slatery III Attorney General & Reporter

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ATTORNEYS GENERAL SUPPORT CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ADDRESSING YOUTH SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Nashville- Attorney General Herbert H. Slatery III is leading a bipartisan coalition of 52 attorneys general expressing strong support for hearings conducted by the U.S. Senate Committee addressing protection and safety of kids and teens using social media.

Attorneys general have been concerned about the harmful impact of social media on the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of young people. Facebook’s own internal studies show social media is inflicting harm—in the form of increased mental distress, bullying, contemplation of suicide, and other self-harm—on a significant number of kids.

“All of us- especially those in charge of the safety and security of children and teenagers- deserve to know exactly how social media platforms are attracting and retaining the attention of more young people in order to monetize their business,” said General Slatery.

In May 2021, a bipartisan coalition of 44 attorneys general wrote a letter to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg urging the company to abandon its plans to launch a version of Instagram for children under the age of 13. That request was ignored. Last week, in advance of the Congressional hearings, Facebook announced its intent to “pause” the project. The attorneys general believe the project should be abandoned altogether.

The attorneys general write, “More engagement by the user equals more data to leverage for advertising, which equals greater profit. This prompts social media companies to design their algorithms and other features to psychologically manipulate young users into a state of addiction to their cell phone screens.”

To read the letter, click here:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/attorneygeneral/documents/pr/2021/pr21-39-letter.pdf>

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