

Chairman Gus Bilirakis Opening Statement  
December 11, 2025, Subcommittee Markup  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade

Good morning, and welcome to today's subcommittee markup, another important step in advancing legislation to protect children online.

Our children are facing an online epidemic. Around 95% of teenagers use social media, and far too many have been cyberbullied or faced other harms online. This issue is personal – we have parents on both sides of the aisle, and all of us represent families back home who have been affected.

In my home district in Tampa Bay, we lost 16-year-old McKenna Brown after relentless online bullying. Her tragedy—and the heartbreak of her family—is a constant reminder of why we must act.

It's because of countless stories like this, that we're here today.

We're considering nearly twenty bills, that together form a comprehensive strategy to protect kids and teens online. Our approach is clear: protect kids, empower parents, and future proof our legislation as new risks and technologies emerge. Families deserve clarity. Parents deserve control. And bad actors must face real consequences.

The Kids Online Safety Act, or KOSA, is among these bills—a strong proposal with concrete safeguards and obligations for companies, and one I am proud to lead.

But no single bill is a complete solution. These proposals work together, complementing and reinforcing one another to create the safest possible environment for children. There is no one-size-fits-all bill to protect kids online—and our plan reflects that.

Parents must be empowered to safeguard their children online. Just as a parent can guide their kids's activities at home and in school, they should be able to guide their children's activities online. Our bills ensure parents have the tools and information they need to keep their kids safe in a modern, increasingly complex environment.

The status quo is unacceptable, and we are here to change and ensure meaningful consequences for platforms that fail to protect our kids.

Today is about progress. It's about setting aside differences and doing right by the families who are counting on us. I'm confident that, working together, we can advance meaningful, bipartisan solutions that give parents peace of mind and make the online world safer for every child. I appreciate the hard work of my colleagues, and I look forward to continuing this effort in the days ahead. With that, I yield back.