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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To protect children against sexual abuse and exploitation, and for other
purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. BURCHETT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

A BILL

To protect children against sexual abuse and exploitation,
and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Preventing Child Sex
5 Abuse Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 The sense of Congress is the following:

1 (1) The safety of children should be a top pri-
2 ority for public officials and communities in the
3 United States.

4 (2) According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest Na-
5 tional Network, an individual in the United States is
6 sexually assaulted every 68 seconds. And every 9
7 minutes, that victim is a child. Meanwhile, only 25
8 out of every 1,000 perpetrators will end up in pris-
9 on.

10 (3) The effects of child sexual abuse can be
11 long-lasting and affect the victim's mental health.

12 (4) Victims are more likely than non-victims to
13 experience the following mental health challenges:

14 (A) Victims are about 4 times more likely
15 to develop symptoms of drug abuse.

16 (B) Victims are about 4 times more likely
17 to experience post-traumatic stress disorder as
18 adults.

19 (C) Victims are about 3 times more likely
20 to experience a major depressive episode as
21 adults.

22 (5) The criminal justice system should and has
23 acted as an important line of defense to protect chil-
24 dren and hold perpetrators accountable.

1 (6) However, the horrific crimes perpetrated by
2 Larry Nassar demonstrate firsthand the loopholes
3 that still exist in the criminal justice system. While
4 Larry Nassar was found guilty of several State-level
5 offenses, he was not charged federally for his illicit
6 sexual contact with minors, despite crossing State
7 and international borders to commit this conduct.

8 (7) The Department of Justice has also identi-
9 fied a growing trend of Americans who use chari-
10 table or missionary work in a foreign country as a
11 cover for sexual abuse of children.

12 (8) It is the intent of Congress to prohibit
13 Americans from engaging in sexual abuse or exploi-
14 tation of minors under the guise of work, including
15 volunteer work, with an organization that affects
16 interstate or foreign commerce, such as an inter-
17 national charity.

18 (9) Federal law does not require that an abus-
19 er's intention to engage in sexual abuse be a pri-
20 mary, significant, dominant, or motivating purpose
21 of the travel.

22 (10) Child sexual abuse does not require phys-
23 ical contact between the abuser and the child. This
24 is especially true as perpetrators turn increasingly to

1 internet platforms, online chat rooms, and webcams
2 to commit child sexual abuse.

3 (11) However, a decision of the United States
4 Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit found the
5 use of a webcam to engage in sexually provocative
6 activity with a minor did not qualify as “sexual ac-
7 tivity”.

8 (12) Congress can address this issue by amend-
9 ing the definition of the term “sexual activity” to
10 clarify that it does not require interpersonal, phys-
11 ical contact.

12 (13) It is the duty of Congress to provide clear-
13 er guidance to ensure that those who commit crimes
14 against children are prosecuted to the fullest extent
15 of the law.

16 **SEC. 3. INTERSTATE CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.**

17 Section 2423 of title 18, United States Code, is
18 amended—

19 (1) in subsection (b), by striking “with a moti-
20 vating purpose of engaging in any illicit sexual con-
21 duct with another person” and inserting “with in-
22 tent to engage in any illicit sexual conduct with an-
23 other person”;

1 (2) by redesignating subsections (d), (e), (f),
2 and (g) as subsections (e), (f), (g), and (i), respec-
3 tively;

4 (3) in subsection (e), as so redesignated, by
5 striking “with a motivating purpose of engaging in
6 any illicit sexual conduct” and inserting “with intent
7 to engage in any illicit sexual conduct”; and

8 (4) by inserting after subsection (g), as so re-
9 designated, the following:

10 “(h) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—As used in this sec-
11 tion, the term ‘intent’ shall be construed as any intention
12 to engage in illicit sexual conduct at the time of the trav-
13 el.”.

14 **SEC. 4. ABUSE UNDER THE GUISE OF CHARITY.**

15 Section 2423 of title 18, United States Code, as
16 amended by section 3 of this Act, is amended—

17 (1) by inserting after subsection (c) the fol-
18 lowing:

19 “(d) ILLICIT SEXUAL CONDUCT IN CONNECTION
20 WITH CERTAIN ORGANIZATIONS.—Any citizen of the
21 United States or alien admitted for permanent residence
22 who—

23 “(1) is an officer, director, employee, or agent
24 of an organization that affects interstate or foreign
25 commerce;

1 “(2) makes use of the mails or any means or
2 instrumentality of interstate or foreign commerce
3 through the connection or affiliation of the person
4 with such organization; and

5 “(3) commits an act in furtherance of illicit sex-
6 ual conduct through the connection or affiliation of
7 the person with such organization,
8 shall be fined under this title, imprisoned for not more
9 than 30 years, or both.”;

10 (2) in subsection (f), as so redesignated, by
11 striking “or (d)” and inserting “(d), or (e)”; and

12 (3) in subsection (i), as so redesignated, by
13 striking “(f)(2)” and inserting “(g)(2)”.

14 **SEC. 5. SEXUAL ACTIVITY WITH MINORS.**

15 Section 2427 of title 18, United States Code, is
16 amended by inserting “does not require interpersonal
17 physical contact, and” before “includes”.