



**H.B. 327 Testimony submitted to the Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee
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Chair Manning, Vice Chair Rezabek, Ranking Member Celebrezze and members of the Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee, thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony on H.B. 327. As Ohio's statewide coalition, the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence advocates for comprehensive responses and rape crisis services for survivors and empowers communities to prevent sexual violence. We feel that addressing the severity of online solicitation will serve survivors not only in Ohio, but also around the globe.

Research demonstrates that sexual abuse and rape cost individual child victims approximately \$241,600.00 over their lifetime.¹ The lifelong neurological, physical, and emotional impact is just as significant – childhood victimization interferes with educational attainment, future job performance, and earnings. It also contributes to substance abuse and increased healthcare costs.²

The internet did not create a separate type of abuse – it created an opportunity to facilitate existing forms of abuse at alarming rates with minimal detection. Its growth is evident and undeniable – as the number of reported sex offenses nationally decreases, the number of arrests for internet sex crimes in the United States tripled between 2000 and 2009.³ This strongly indicates a shift in the methods abusers employ – which makes sense – app developers create opportunities for interactions and communications between strangers that are unchecked by responsible adults and in some cases untraceable.

With this existing technology, Ohio offenders can and likely do solicit and/or sell images of Ohio children to buyers all over the world. Sex crime survivors often report that lack of incarceration for the perpetrator can be just as traumatic as the original abuse –overall, too many traumatized victims will never see justice, and too many additional children will be needlessly victimized. We

¹ National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, *Costs, Consequences and Solutions*, <http://endsexualviolence.org/where-we-stand/costs-consequences-and-solutions>. (Citing MacMillan, R. (2000). Adolescent victimization and income deficits in adulthood: Rethinking the costs of criminal violence from a life-course perspective, *Criminology*, 38, 553-588.)

² Dolezal, T., McCollum, D., & Callahan, M. (2009). *Hidden costs in health care: The economic impact of violence and abuse*. Eden Prairie, MN: Academy on Violence & Abuse, available at <http://avahealth.org/vertical/Sites/%7B75FA0828-D713-4580-A29D-257F315BB94F%7D/uploads/%7B316BEE7E-F7BB-418E-A246-AF9BB8175CF8%7D.PDF>.

³ Michael Seto, Ph.D., *SOMAPI Research Briefs: Internet-Facilitated Sexual Offending* (July 2015), U.S. Dept. of Justice, Office of Justice Programs: Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking, available at <https://smart.gov/pdfs/InternetFacilitatedSexualOffending.pdf>.

believe that the best way to stop these outcomes is to engage in substantial prevention work and properly penalize internet perpetrators.

Many states have acted to curtail online solicitation by bolstering sentences and designing prevention programming that teaches parents, teachers, coaches, caregivers and children the ways in which technological developments can lead to abuse. We now have the opportunity to do the same, ensuring that Ohio does not become a safe haven for these predators. OAESV, its member rape crisis centers, and individual clients are working tirelessly to develop and provide training on these dangers, but that is not enough. We also need to recognize the severe impact these offenses have on Ohio's children and families, and respond accordingly.

Ultimately, we know that predators reoffend, particularly when they escape both detection and justice. Stopping just one predator can save countless children and those children are worth saving.

Should any committee members have additional questions, please feel free to reach out to me by telephone at (216) 658-1381, or by email at ccrary@oaesv.org. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony.