

Chairman Manning, Vice Chairman Rezabek, Ranking member Celebrezze and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony in support of House Bill 327.

My name is Carl Sullivan. I am an Assistant Cuyahoga County Prosecutor and the Director of Prosecutions for the Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (or ICAC for short). I have been a Prosecutor for ten years and working in ICAC for three. We investigate and prosecute cases ranging from individuals sharing and creating child pornography, grooming children all over the State of Ohio, traveling to meet young children to engage in sexual activity, and we respond to thousands of Cybertips from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

I teach Continuing Legal Education to Prosecutors as well as train Detectives across the State on all issues related to child exploitation on the internet and social media activity. I speak to parents, teachers, and students weekly not just in Cuyahoga County but in numerous neighboring counties about the dangers and safety measures in place to avoid predators on-line and how to keep children safe in our communities. I advise Prosecutors and Detectives on how to handle the cases we are here about today and receive phone calls and e-mails not only about child pornography prevention and detection but how to capture the individuals who Importune on the children in Ohio.

The Ohio Internet Crimes Task Force is led by the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office. Ohio ICAC is one of 61 federally funded agencies by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The Ohio ICAC has 357 law enforcement partners across the state. We are the largest task force in the nation and handle the second most Cybertips.

I am responsible for not only the prosecution of these cases but also ensuring that my 11 investigators across the State are on the cutting edge of the detection and capture of these sexual predators. Our ICAC investigators handle over a thousand investigations a year in this realm of child exploitation. I and my team in Cuyahoga County prosecute over 100 cases a year including around 30 cases a year involving what we call "Travelers" and "Importuners."

As it relates specifically to Importuning cases, the majority of individuals that we come across are adult males that are attempting to engage in sexual activity with girls between the ages of 12 to 15 years old. Today's offenders no longer need to select their victims from the playgrounds, streets or school yards. Facebook, Skype, Instagram, Snapchat, KIK Messenger, Chatstep, and Musically have been the virtual playgrounds favored by those seeking to exploit children. When you consider that Facebook has 1.9 billion active users, it is easy to understand how simple it is for offenders to find child victims online. Just as simple is an offender's ability to turn casual dialogue into sexually explicit conversation, harmful and obscene material, child pornography, prostitution, human trafficking, drug use, and extortion.

I have seen and read hundreds of thousands of texts and messages from these social media applications and the content of these message make it clear that these adults are Grooming these young children. They start by telling them how they can be a friend and will help them deal with whatever issues are inflicting them. Once the child has laid trust in the Importuner, the

conversations always turn sexual in nature. And when I say sexual in nature, I mean disturbing and despicable conversation that would leave any person in this room in absolute shock and dismay.

In April of 2014, ICAC Investigators, in an undercover capacity posing as a 15 year old Juvenile Female met a 27 year old man named Kevin on Tinder. Using the geo-locate button on Tinder, 27 year old men can find children under 16 years old and begin chatting with them. Once they began to chat, the conversation switched to Facebook messenger and eventually KIK messenger.

Several online conversations between the 15 year old and Kevin occurred in 2014. Kevin asked the minor for her phone number and once he had it, began texting the minor things he would do to her body, where he would lick her, touch her, where he would engage in sex with her and how much it would hurt. Kevin then indicated that he felt like he could get in trouble for doing stuff with her and needed to decide if it was worth the risk. Kevin, however, continued not only sexual conversations, but talked about how he was masturbating while thinking about her and then sent her pictures of his erect penis on multiple occasions.

In June of 2015, Kevin eventually traveled to Cuyahoga County to meet the now 16 year old juvenile female for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity. Kevin arrived, was arrested, and was found to have a package of opened condoms that he had recently purchased.

“Kevin” is Gregory Kevin Moser, 27 years of age, and he pleaded Guilty in October 2015 to Importuning and Disseminating Matter Harmful to a Juveniles and was sentenced to community control sanctions in December of 2015.

“Kevin” was a school teacher in Ohio when he began chatting with the 15 year old undercover profile in 2014. Kevin then moved out of state, but Kevin didn’t stop teaching. During the course of over a years’ worth of conversation, Kevin held the same occupation. When he arrived in June of 2015 to have sex with the Juvenile female, he was a Math teacher in Houston, Texas teaching students aged 14 and 15 years old. Moser also later admitted in his statement that he had engaged in sexual activity in the past with a 17 year old girl.

If you folks, think this is the type of individual who doesn’t deserve to go to prison, than don’t pass this house bill. But a teacher in two states who teachers Junior High Schoolers and then tries to engage in sexual activity with individuals their age, should be in prison, and it should be mandatory. I would ask this committee to support this legislation and I am happy to answer any questions the committee might have.