

Linda Harvey Testimony on HB 295  
House Criminal Justice Committee

Thank you so much for permitting me to submit testimony in favor of HB 295, to enact a law providing more robust protection against obscenity in Ohio.

I am president of Mission America ( [www.missionamerica.com](http://www.missionamerica.com) ) and I also serve on the board of Protect Ohio Children ( [www.protectohiochildren.net](http://www.protectohiochildren.net) ). I have also been a radio talk show host at the Central Ohio station, The Word Columbus, for 15 years. My articles appear in many publications across the Internet and one of the topics I cover frequently is the culture's impact on youth.

The harm that pornography is having in America cannot be overstated, but it's especially detrimental to minors. In their formative years, minors are quickly derailed from emotional stability, high academic achievement, and civil behavior if exposed to heavy doses of pornography. The child who is sexualized early, even if it's through images and not assault or statutory rape, often becomes obsessed with this new discovery, to the neglect of more beneficial activities.

The early porn user is likely to become an emotionally hardened abuser of others. Empathy levels are low and emotional immaturity is high. Criminal sexual assailants are highly likely to be long-time porn users. Jails are full of heavy porn users.

Women and children are the most common victims of sexual assaults and porn use is often involved. Males who dive into porn at an early age are much more likely to commit sexual crimes.

It is imperative that state laws treat children tenderly, and not succumb to progressive pressures to act as if they are small adults. They are not, and our laws have traditionally bent in preference to child protection, and in recognition of their developmental stages, withhold certain rights and privileges until majority, as well as affording certain protection because they are easy to influence.

Innocence is a real thing and it's not a discardable annoyance. It's vital to the development of adult maturity, to becoming a person who is not a utilitarian user and abuser of others.

House Bill 295 will be a very positive defense for minors against ready access to harmful, explicit images. The bill is also valuable in prohibiting false, cyber-produced sexual images of any person.

I urge you to provide stronger protections against obscenity and to pass House Bill 295.