

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025*

**Remarks on Signing the TAKE IT DOWN Act and an Exchange With Reporters**  
*May 19, 2025*

*The First Lady.* Thank you. Good afternoon, and welcome to the White House.

It's honor to join you here today for the signing of the TAKE IT DOWN Act, a national victory that will help parents and families protect children from online exploitation.

This legislation is a powerful step forward in our efforts to ensure that every American, especially young people, can feel better protected from their image or identity being abused through nonconsensual intimate imagery of I—NCII.

Artificial intelligence and social media are the digital candy for the next generation: sweet, addictive, and engineered to have an impact on the cognitive development of our children. But unlike sugar, these new technologies can be weaponized, shape beliefs, and sadly, affect emotions and even be deadly.

Over the past few months, I have met with brave survivors, deeply loving families, and caring advocates who now—who know firsthand the emotional and psychological toll of NCII and deepfake abuse.

Elliston Berry stood boldly for change despite the risk posed to her and her family by speaking out and making her voice heard. Elliston, your voice and the voices of so many like you made this bill a national priority.

Many thanks to Members of Congress, both parties, for passing this legislation, including Speaker Johnson, Senator Cruz, Senator Klobuchar, Congresswoman Salazar, Congresswoman Dean, and Congressman Guthrie and so many more. Thank you all for coming together to prioritize people over politics.

As First Lady, my Be Best initiative is focused on improving children's well-being, encouraging kindness, and creating a safer online environment for our youth. Today I am proud to say that the values of Be Best will be reflected in the law of the land.

I want to thank my husband, President Trump, for standing with us on this effort. His signature on this new law is now—is not where our work ends of this—on this issue. Now, we look to the Federal Trade Commission and the private sector to do their part.

Today, through the TAKE IT DOWN Act, we affirm that the well-being of our children is central to our future of our families and America.

Now it is my pleasure to introduce the President. Thank you.

*The President.* Thank you, honey. Good job, sweetie.

*The First Lady.* Thank you.

*The President.* You want to sit down, honey?

*The First Lady.* Yes.

*The President.* Because I'm a gentleman. [*Laughter*] Nobody knew that.

Great job. That was a great job.

Well, I want to thank everybody. We just spent 2½ hours talking to Vladimir Putin, and I think some progress has been made.

It's a terrible situation going on over there. Five thousand young people every single week are being killed. So, hopefully, we did something.

We also spoke to the heads of most of the European nations, and we're trying to get that whole thing wrapped up. What a shame that it ever started in the first place, so—but I want to thank Melania for your leadership in this very important issue. It's an amazing issue. America is blessed to have such a dedicated and compassionate First Lady. I will tell you, she is very dedicated.

In fact, if you look at just what I heard, Putin just said, "They respect your wife a lot." I said, "What about me?" [Laughter] But no, they—well, they like Melania better. That wasn't good. I don't know if that was good. I'm okay with it. I'm okay.

I also want to congratulate the First Lady on securing \$25 million in the first fiscal year 2026 budget to provide housing and support for youth transitioning out of the foster care. And I can say that she loves children. And you really worked very hard on this, and you had a lot of help from some friends of mine right here. And a lot of the Senators are here and Congressmen, and I appreciate you all being here.

We're also grateful to be joined by people that are just in love with what we're doing—it's such an important situation—and Commissioners of the Federal Trade Commission and the CEO of X, Linda Yaccarino. Where are you, Linda? Where are you, Linda? Thank you. Thank you, Linda—stand up. Thank you, Linda. Great job. You're doing a great job. It's a big deal, right? [Laughter] That's great.

Today, it's my honor to officially sign the TAKE IT DOWN Act into law. It's a big thing. Very important. It's so horrible what takes place. This will be the first-ever Federal law to combat the distribution of explicit imaginary [imagery; White House correction] posted without a subject's consent. They take horrible pictures and, I guess, sometimes even make up the pictures, and they post it without consent or anything else.

And very importantly, this includes for forgeries generated by artificial intelligence, known as "deepfakes." We've all heard about deepfakes. I have them all the time, but I don't—nobody does anything. I asked Pam, "Can you help me, Pam?" She says: "No, I'm too busy. Too busy doing other things." [Laughter] "Don't worry, you'll survive." But a lot of people don't survive. That's true and so horrible.

With the rise of AI image generation, countless women have been harassed with deepfakes and other explicit images distributed against their will. This is the—wrong and—it's just so horribly wrong, and it's a very abusive situation like, in some cases, people have never seen before. And today we're making it totally illegal. Thank you.

Upon hearing the stories of so many women affected, our First Lady made stopping these abuses a top priority, and she was given tremendous support, because people—she'd go up to people and talk about it, and they'd say: "Yes, we know about it. We have the problem. Can we do something?" And she did something about it with the help a lot of—of a lot of the people, especially the political people sitting here today.

Among Melania's guests in the gallery during my address to the joint session of Congress was a 15-year-old young person, Elliston Berry, whose image was turned into an illicit deepfake by a peer. Elliston, where are you? Are you around? Stand up, darling. That's fine. Beautiful. That's great. Thank you. You look fantastic.

Elliston quickly became a powerful advocate committed to preventing other girls from suffering the same abuse. Elliston, we salute you, and we thank you very much, and it's an honor to have you with us today. Great—great job you've done.

Also with us are several other brave Americans whose lives were rocked by online harassment, including Francesca Mani, as well as a South Carolina State Representative, Brandon Guffey, and his family, who lost their son to suicide after he was targeted in an internet extortion scam, of which you have a lot of them—a lot. I want to thank you both for your incredible work and—to reach this important day.

Could you stand up, please? Thank you. Thank you very much. Great job. I've read about it. Thank you very much.

It's a real honor to have you here, because there's no place like the White House, I've found out. You know? You have a lot of places, and I just left some of the richest places, and we loved them, and we—they gave us a nice contribution of about \$5 trillion. But this is a special place. Even they talk about it. So it's great to have everybody here.

Under the law I will sign in just a moment, anyone who intentionally distributes explicit images without the subject's consent will face up to 3 years in prison. In addition, this law establishes new civil liabilities for online platforms that refuse to take these images down promptly upon request. We will not tolerate online sexual exploitation and especially—it's gone on at levels that nobody has ever seen before. It's getting worse and worse, and I think this is going to hopefully stop it.

And not easy to do. People talked about all sorts of First Amendment, Second Amendment—they talked about any—amendment they could make up, and we got it through because of some very brave people, including some very brave politicians in the audience.

I want to thank the bill sponsors, Senator Ted Cruz—Ted, stand up, please. *[Applause]* Great. Great. Thank you, Ted. That's great. Very effective person. And Congresswoman Maria Salazar, a friend of mine. Thank you, Maria. Thank you very much—for their amazing work. And thanks also to the 99 Senators and 408 Members of Congress who voted in favor of the bill.

Wow. I wish we could get that vote from other things. We have another bill coming up. Do you think we'll get that vote? *[Laughter]* Maybe not. We should—*[laughter]*—but we probably won't.

But working with our First Lady, we've shown that bipartisanship is still possible. That's true. We—99 Senators. That's incredible.

Senators, stand up. Look at that. John, you're here. Look at all of the Senators. This is big stuff. I'm in trouble because I don't have your names. They didn't give me these names. We have so many—we have half of the Senate here. Now they're all going to hate me because I can't introduce you all. We don't have the time for that. I have to get back to Putin and people. *[Laughter]*

But thank you very much for being here, all of you, and Congressmen—a lot of them—and -women.

Working with our First Lady, though, we've shown that that bipartisanship is possible. I mean, it's the first time I've seen such a level of bipartisanship, and it's a beautiful thing to do.

I'm not even sure you realize, honey, you know, a lot of the Democrats and Republicans don't get along so well. You've made them get along, and she didn't even know about that. She didn't know we had a problem. She didn't know we had a problem. She got a—but I want to thank you. Honey, you've done amazing, that this was done.

When you started it, I said, "I don't know. It sounds like a tough one," and yet a very important one, and you got it done. So I congratulate you.

And I congratulate Ted, Maria—everybody. Thank you very much. Thank you.

And we'll sign the bill. Thank you.

*The President.* Oh. I see a name, "Chuck Grassley." [Laughter] He's been around a long time, huh?

Come on around. That's beautiful.

[At this point, the President and First Lady greeted participants.]

That's fantastic.

Okay. You ready?

[The President signed the bill.]

Okay. Honey, are you signing something? Do you want to sign it anyway? [Laughter]

*The First Lady.* Yes, I can sign it.

*The President.* Come on. Sign it anyway.

*The First Lady.* Okay.

*The President.* Why not? [Laughter] She deserves to sign it.

[The First Lady signed the bill.]

Beautiful. Okay. There we have it. That's a big one.

Thank you very much, everyone.

And you have some pens here. You—most importantly, right? Grab one of them. Oh, look at these white pens. I've never seen that before. [Laughter] I want one of them. I've never seen them.

Here, Pamela, take that. Take that. [Laughter]

Thank you very much, everybody.

[The President handed out signing pens to participants.]

Okay? Thank you everybody.

*Senator R. Edward Cruz.* Mr. President, let me introduce you to Brandon, who lost his son, Gavin.

*The President.* Let me get up.

*Sen. Cruz.* He's a State legislator in South Carolina. He's been incredibly brave, and his whole family—[inaudible].

*The President.* [Inaudible]

[The President spoke to participants. He then addressed reporters as follows.]

*President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia*

*Q.* President Trump, do you think Vladimir Putin wants peace?

*The President.* I do, yes.

*Q.* Do you still trust Putin?

*Q.* Can you trust him, sir?

*The President.* I do—[inaudible].

*Q.* Mr. President, sir—

*Russia/Ukraine*

*Q.* Do you still trust Vladimir Putin?

*Q.* Mr. President, do you think Pope Leo can help bring peace to Ukraine?

*The President.* I do.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 3:20 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. S. 146, approved May 19, was assigned Public Law No. 119–12. In his remarks, he referred to Federal Trade Commissioners Andrew N. Ferguson, Melissa A. Holyoak, and Mark R. Meador; Attorney General Pamela J. Bondi; Aledo, TX, resident Elliston Barry; Westfield, NJ, resident Francesca Mani; and Sen. Charles E. Grassley. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on May 20.

*Categories:* Bill Signings and Vetoes : TAKE IT DOWN Act, signing remarks; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

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*Names:* Berry, Elliston; Bondi, Pamela J.; Cruz, R. Edward "Ted"; Ferguson, Andrew N.; Grassley, Charles E.; Guffey, Brandon; Holyoak, Melissa A.; Mani, Francesca; Meador, Mark R.; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Salazar, Maria E.; Trump, Melania; Yaccarino, Linda.

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