

Public Law 107-317
107th Congress

An Act

To facilitate the creation of a new, second-level Internet domain within the United States country code domain that will be a haven for material that promotes positive experiences for children and families using the Internet, provides a safe online environment for children, and helps to prevent children from being exposed to harmful material on the Internet, and for other purposes.

Dec. 4, 2002

[H.R. 3833]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Dot Kids
Implementation
and Efficiency
Act of 2002.
47 USC 901 note.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Dot Kids Implementation and Efficiency Act of 2002”.

47 USC 941 note.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

(1) the World Wide Web presents a stimulating and entertaining opportunity for children to learn, grow, and develop educationally and intellectually;

(2) Internet technology also makes available an extensive amount of information that is harmful to children, as studies indicate that a significant portion of all material available on the Internet is related to pornography;

(3) young children, when trying to use the World Wide Web for positive purposes, are often presented—either mistakenly or intentionally—with material that is inappropriate for their age, which can be extremely frustrating for children, parents, and educators;

(4) exposure of children to material that is inappropriate for them, including pornography, can distort the education and development of the Nation's youth and represents a serious harm to American families that can lead to a host of other problems for children, including inappropriate use of chat rooms, physical molestation, harassment, and legal and financial difficulties;

(5) young boys and girls, older teens, troubled youth, frequent Internet users, chat room participants, online risk takers, and those who communicate online with strangers are at greater risk for receiving unwanted sexual solicitation on the Internet;

(6) studies have shown that 19 percent of youth (ages 10 to 17) who used the Internet regularly were the targets of unwanted sexual solicitation, but less than 10 percent of the solicitations were reported to the police;

(7) children who come across illegal content should report it to the congressionally authorized CyberTipline, an online

mechanism developed by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, for citizens to report sexual crimes against children;

(8) the CyberTipline has received more than 64,400 reports, including reports of child pornography, online enticement for sexual acts, child molestation (outside the family), and child prostitution;

(9) although the computer software and hardware industries, and other related industries, have developed innovative ways to help parents and educators restrict material that is harmful to minors through parental control protections and self-regulation, to date such efforts have not provided a national solution to the problem of minors accessing harmful material on the World Wide Web;

(10) the creation of a “green-light” area within the United States country code Internet domain, that will contain only content that is appropriate for children under the age of 13, is analogous to the creation of a children’s section within a library and will promote the positive experiences of children and families in the United States; and

(11) while custody, care, and nurture of the child reside first with the parent, the protection of the physical and psychological well-being of minors by shielding them from material that is harmful to them is a compelling governmental interest.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to facilitate the creation of a second-level domain within the United States country code Internet domain for the location of material that is suitable for minors and not harmful to minors; and

(2) to ensure that the National Telecommunications and Information Administration oversees the creation of such a second-level domain and ensures the effective and efficient establishment and operation of the new domain.

SEC. 3. NTIA AUTHORITY.

Section 103(b)(3) of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration Organization Act (47 U.S.C. 902(b)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) shall assign to the NTIA responsibility for providing for the establishment, and overseeing operation, of a second-level Internet domain within the United States country code domain in accordance with section 157.”.

SEC. 4. CHILD-FRIENDLY SECOND-LEVEL INTERNET DOMAIN.

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration Organization Act (47 U.S.C. 901 et seq.) is amended in part C by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 157. CHILD-FRIENDLY SECOND-LEVEL INTERNET DOMAIN.

47 USC 941.

“(a) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The NTIA shall require the registry selected to operate and maintain the United States country code Internet domain to establish, operate, and maintain a second-level domain within the United States country code domain that provides

access only to material that is suitable for minors and not harmful to minors (in this section referred to as the 'new domain').

"(b) CONDITIONS OF CONTRACTS.—

"(1) INITIAL REGISTRY.—The NTIA shall not exercise any option periods under any contract between the NTIA and the initial registry to operate and maintain the United States country code Internet domain unless the initial registry agrees, during the 90-day period beginning upon the date of the enactment of the Dot Kids Implementation and Efficiency Act of 2002, to carry out, and to operate the new domain in accordance with, the requirements under subsection (c). Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent the initial registry of the United States country code Internet domain from participating in the NTIA's process for selecting a successor registry or to prevent the NTIA from awarding, to the initial registry, the contract to be successor registry subject to the requirements of paragraph (2).

"(2) SUCCESSOR REGISTRIES.—The NTIA shall not enter into any contract for operating and maintaining the United States country code Internet domain with any successor registry unless such registry enters into an agreement with the NTIA, during the 90-day period after selection of such registry, that provides for the registry to carry out, and the new domain to operate in accordance with, the requirements under subsection (c).

"(c) REQUIREMENTS OF NEW DOMAIN.—The registry and new domain shall be subject to the following requirements:

"(1) Written content standards for the new domain, except that the NTIA shall not have any authority to establish such standards.

"(2) Written agreements with each registrar for the new domain that require that use of the new domain is in accordance with the standards and requirements of the registry.

"(3) Written agreements with registrars, which shall require registrars to enter into written agreements with registrants, to use the new domain in accordance with the standards and requirements of the registry.

"(4) Rules and procedures for enforcement and oversight that minimize the possibility that the new domain provides access to content that is not in accordance with the standards and requirements of the registry.

"(5) A process for removing from the new domain any content that is not in accordance with the standards and requirements of the registry.

"(6) A process to provide registrants to the new domain with an opportunity for a prompt, expeditious, and impartial dispute resolution process regarding any material of the registrant excluded from the new domain.

"(7) Continuous and uninterrupted service for the new domain during any transition to a new registry selected to operate and maintain new domain or the United States country code domain.

"(8) Procedures and mechanisms to promote the accuracy of contact information submitted by registrants and retained by registrars in the new domain.

“(9) Operationality of the new domain not later than one year after the date of the enactment of the Dot Kids Implementation and Efficiency Act of 2002.

“(10) Written agreements with registrars, which shall require registrars to enter into written agreements with registrants, to prohibit two-way and multiuser interactive services in the new domain, unless the registrant certifies to the registrar that such service will be offered in compliance with the content standards established pursuant to paragraph (1) and is designed to reduce the risk of exploitation of minors using such two-way and multiuser interactive services.

“(11) Written agreements with registrars, which shall require registrars to enter into written agreements with registrants, to prohibit hyperlinks in the new domain that take new domain users outside of the new domain.

“(12) Any other action that the NTIA considers necessary to establish, operate, or maintain the new domain in accordance with the purposes of this section.

“(d) **OPTION PERIODS FOR INITIAL REGISTRY.**—The NTIA shall grant the initial registry the option periods available under the contract between the NTIA and the initial registry to operate and maintain the United States country code Internet domain if, and may not grant such option periods unless, the NTIA finds that the initial registry has satisfactorily performed its obligations under this Act and under the contract. Nothing in this section shall preempt or alter the NTIA’s authority to terminate such contract for the operation of the United States country code Internet domain for cause or for convenience.

“(e) **TREATMENT OF REGISTRY AND OTHER ENTITIES.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Only to the extent that such entities carry out functions under this section, the following entities are deemed to be interactive computer services for purposes of section 230(c) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 230(c)):

“(A) The registry that operates and maintains the new domain.

“(B) Any entity that contracts with such registry to carry out functions to ensure that content accessed through the new domain complies with the limitations applicable to the new domain.

“(C) Any registrar for the registry of the new domain that is operating in compliance with its agreement with the registry.

“(2) **SAVINGS PROVISION.**—Nothing in paragraph (1) shall be construed to affect the applicability of any other provision of title II of the Communications Act of 1934 to the entities covered by subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of paragraph (1).

“(f) **EDUCATION.**—The NTIA shall carry out a program to publicize the availability of the new domain and to educate the parents of minors regarding the process for utilizing the new domain in combination and coordination with hardware and software technologies that provide for filtering or blocking. The program under this subsection shall be commenced not later than 30 days after the date that the new domain first becomes operational and accessible by the public.

“(g) **COORDINATION WITH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.**—The registry selected to operate and maintain the new domain shall—

Deadline.

"(1) consult with appropriate agencies of the Federal Government regarding procedures and actions to prevent minors and families who use the new domain from being targeted by adults and other children for predatory behavior, exploitation, or illegal actions; and

"(2) based upon the consultations conducted pursuant to paragraph (1), establish such procedures and take such actions as the registry may deem necessary to prevent such targeting. The consultations, procedures, and actions required under this subsection shall be commenced not later than 30 days after the date that the new domain first becomes operational and accessible by the public.

Deadline.

Deadline.

"(h) COMPLIANCE REPORT.—The registry shall prepare, on an annual basis, a report on the registry's monitoring and enforcement procedures for the new domain. The registry shall submit each such report, setting forth the results of the review of its monitoring and enforcement procedures for the new domain, to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

"(i) SUSPENSION OF NEW DOMAIN.—If the NTIA finds, pursuant to its own review or upon a good faith petition by the registry, that the new domain is not serving its intended purpose, the NTIA shall instruct the registry to suspend operation of the new domain until such time as the NTIA determines that the new domain can be operated as intended.

"(j) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

"(1) HARMFUL TO MINORS.—The term 'harmful to minors' means, with respect to material, that—

"(A) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find, taking the material as a whole and with respect to minors, that it is designed to appeal to, or is designed to pander to, the prurient interest;

"(B) the material depicts, describes, or represents, in a manner patently offensive with respect to minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, an actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual act, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals or post-pubescent female breast; and

"(C) taken as a whole, the material lacks serious, literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.

"(2) MINOR.—The term 'minor' means any person under 13 years of age.

"(3) REGISTRY.—The term 'registry' means the registry selected to operate and maintain the United States country code Internet domain.

"(4) SUCCESSOR REGISTRY.—The term 'successor registry' means any entity that enters into a contract with the NTIA to operate and maintain the United States country code Internet domain that covers any period after the termination or expiration of the contract to operate and maintain the United States country code Internet domain, and any option periods under such contract, that was signed on October 26, 2001.

"(5) SUITABLE FOR MINORS.—The term 'suitable for minors' means, with respect to material, that it—

“(A) is not psychologically or intellectually inappropriate for minors; and

“(B) serves—

“(i) the educational, informational, intellectual, or cognitive needs of minors; or

“(ii) the social, emotional, or entertainment needs of minors.”.

Approved December 4, 2002.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 3833:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 107-449 (Comm. on Energy and Commerce).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 148 (2002):

May 21, considered and passed House.

Nov. 13, considered and passed Senate, amended.

Nov. 14, House concurred in Senate amendment.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS, Vol. 38 (2002):

Dec. 4, Presidential remarks.