

Testimony of
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Hearing on
“Sex Crimes and the Internet”

Introduction

Good morning, Chairman Conyers, Ranking Member Smith and members of the Committee. Yahoo! is grateful for the opportunity to appear before the Committee to discuss the critically important issue of how parents, educators, law enforcement, and service providers can work together to enhance safety for children online. In my eight years working for Yahoo!, I have seen significant growth in the user empowerment tools, educational resources, and enforcement systems that industry-leading providers have put in place to protect all consumers while they are online. Unfortunately, I have also seen how, despite these efforts, some criminals can persist in seeking to circumvent these measures.

Today, I would like to start by providing you with an overview of the steps Yahoo! has taken on its own network and in partnership with our industry peers, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (“NCMEC”), and law enforcement to contribute to a safer online environment. In addition to discussing Yahoo!’s role in contributing to online safety, I would like to highlight areas where we think that the government can be particularly effective in addressing these issues. Finally, I would like to express our support for targeted legislative proposals that, if enacted, would help further combat online predatory behavior while making the most efficient use of the resources of law enforcement, industry members, and the judiciary.

I. About Yahoo!

Yahoo! is a leading global Internet brand and one of the most visited Internet destinations worldwide. Yahoo! has nearly 500 million unique users each month. We

offer a broad range and deep array of innovative products and services that are designed to provide our users with the power to connect, communicate, create, access, and share information online. Yahoo! is primarily an advertising-supported company, which enables us to offer many of our services for free. As an online destination, Yahoo! does not provide users with Internet access. Users may access Yahoo! using any mode of Internet access available to them, whether through our partners Verizon and AT&T, through a dial-up connection, or via a wireless connection in a coffee shop.

II. Yahoo!'s Commitment to Safety

Yahoo!'s commitment to fostering a safe online environment for users of all ages begins with our own products and services. Yahoo! actively works to prevent people from misusing our service to harm children. We have demonstrated our commitment to child safety by focusing our efforts on four key areas:

- 1) Building safer online spaces by educating users and providing user empowerment tools;
- 2) Developing tools and policies for reporting;
- 3) Developing processes for detecting and deterring child pornography; and
- 4) Partnering with law enforcement, child advocacy groups and our industry peers.

I would like to tell you about our prior successes and our current efforts in each of these four areas to enhance online safety for children.

A. Educating Users and Building Safer Online Spaces

Yahoo!'s commitment to educating our users and building safer online spaces dates back to the early days of the company, when we launched our child-safe service, Yahoooligans. Now known as Yahoo! Kids, this service offers our younger users news, music, games, jokes, safety links, and other educational content. For older users, we have focused on developing user empowerment tools that help consumers customize their online experiences. These tools include our SafeSearch filter, which allows users to filter adult content from multimedia and text search results; language filters in message boards, IM, chat, and elsewhere; parental control tools offered in conjunction with our broadband partners to help parents customize and monitor their children's online experiences; and privacy preferences that allow users to decide what information about themselves to publish, what content they would like to share and with whom they want to communicate. These tools allow users to exercise their own judgment about the types of content and activities they want to experience on our network.

Yahoo! also has made it a top priority to educate our users about how to use these tools and how to stay safe online more generally. We provide instructions on tool use in Yahoo! Help, and we promote safety information in key services such as Yahoo! Personals and our new beta service Mash, as well as through our centralized security and safety resource centers. As part of our educational efforts, we recently re-launched our Family Resource Center as Yahoo! Safely. (safely.yahoo.com) Yahoo! Safely is an innovative educational site for parents and kids about the do's and don'ts of online safety. The site features content customized to each of these audiences, bringing together articles by leading experts on online safety such as Parry Aftab, i-SAFE and Internet Keepsafe Coalition side by side with interactive games, polls, and quizzes for kids. We continue to

look for additional ways to educate our users and Internet users generally within our network and our industry and governmental partnerships.

B. Tools and Policies to Encourage Reporting

Another critical part of creating a safer online environment is the ability to respond to inappropriate activity on our network by implementing reporting tools and policies. Yahoo! has strict Terms of Service that prohibit behavior that is harmful to minors. To best enforce our Terms of Service, we rely heavily on the eyes and ears of our users, who supplement our efforts to detect inappropriate content.

Because of the key role that user reporting plays in helping us detect inappropriate content, we have taken steps to encourage user reporting and to provide tools to make such reports more effective. We include “report abuse” links throughout many of our services, including prominent placements in chat and webcam windows, alongside video links in Yahoo! video, and on every profile on Yahoo! 360° and our Mash beta. To make the most of user reports, we have developed a chat transcript tool, which allows customer care representatives to see a snapshot of the chat discussion that was reported.

We also work with partners such as the Internet Watch Foundation who report inappropriate behavior to us. In 2006, Yahoo! Inc. expanded on the longstanding relationship Yahoo! UK had with the Internet Watch Foundation, the “IWF”. The IWF compiles a list of child abuse URLs that service providers can use to remove or block child pornography content. We regularly receive updated lists from the IWF and remove the URLs listed from our search indices in the UK, the US, and many other countries. By working with the Financial Coalition on Child Pornography (“Financial Coalition”) – a

group convened by NCMEC that connects financial institutions, credit card companies, payment systems, and Internet service providers to bring an end to commercial child pornography – we have gathered important information that helps us identify inappropriate sites on our service.

After reviewing user reports, Yahoo! takes action on its network and for many of these, we take the further step of reporting to NCMEC. Yahoo! has invested significant efforts in developing systems and policies for reporting child pornography to NCMEC largely because of Congress's efforts in passing the Protection of Children from Sexual Predators Act (Pub. L. 105-314, Oct. 30, 1998) in 1998. Although the reporting statute only requires providers to report "facts and circumstances" of instances of child pornography, we have worked closely with NCMEC and law enforcement to include the most helpful pieces of information in our NCMEC reports to facilitate successful referrals, investigations and prosecutions.

We also have designed new features to assist in the identification of users engaged in unlawful activity. For example, we now gather Internet protocol address information associated with photo uploads in Flickr, 360, and Profiles so that source information can be reported to NCMEC. In addition, we worked with our peers in the U.S. Internet Providers Association and NCMEC to develop Sound Practices for Child Pornography Reporting. The Sound Practices, finalized in 2005, have filled an important void in the current reporting statute by educating providers on the key elements that child pornography reports should contain for successful referrals to law enforcement. The success of the Sound Practices comes from their flexible approach, which allows

providers with diverse portfolios of services to each develop reporting practices that make sense in the context of the information available through their businesses.

For instance, we know that a geographic locator is a key information element NCMEC needs to assign a report to the appropriate law enforcement jurisdiction. Yahoo! has both self-reported zip-code information and IP addresses in this category. We worked with NCMEC over time to develop systems to report IP addresses as the more reliable information to include in our reports, but law enforcement can still get the zip code information through legal process if they choose to pursue the report.

C. Detering and Detecting Child Pornography

Yahoo!'s third area of focus is to improve online safety through the development of tools and procedures for deterring and detecting child pornography. Yahoo! is committed to being proactive on our network and to sending a clear message to child predators that they are not welcome on our services. In order to do this, we have had to develop systems that allow us to quickly find and remove offending content. This requires a multi-faceted approach that employs filters and algorithms, user and third-party reports, and human review.

Last year, Yahoo!, together with AOL, Microsoft, Google, Earthlink and United Online pledged support for a technology coalition ("Technology Coalition") dedicated to developing better mechanisms to allow providers to detect and remove child pornography from their networks. Since then, coalition members have contributed nearly \$1 million of funding, executed a partnership agreement and worked with NCMEC to create the top level structure for a hash database. Such a database would allow providers to work with

NCMEC to automate identification and removal of known child pornography images on specific areas of coalition members networks. We are currently in discussions with NCMEC to implement this project.

In addition to developing technology for detecting child pornography, we also gather intelligence on trends and emerging methods through ongoing dialogue. One way we do this is through our work with the Financial Coalition, which has helped Yahoo! better understand emerging trends in this area and formulate improved procedures and tools for eliminating commercial child pornography websites. Yahoo! also gathers important intelligence about trends and patterns in child pornography crimes through regular dialogue and meetings with experts in this area, including NCMEC, Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces (“ICACs”), and state Attorneys General offices.

D. Partnerships

The fourth aspect of Yahoo!’s strategy for improving online child safety is developing and maintaining partnerships with law enforcement, child advocacy groups, and industry peers.

1. Law Enforcement

Yahoo! supports law enforcement investigations within the framework of our Terms of Service, our Privacy Policy, and the trust of our users worldwide. Yahoo!’s compliance team is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to handle emergencies and responds to law enforcement requests. Child exploitation requests are given priority handling.

Yahoo! also provides information and training to law enforcement agencies. Yahoo! has created a Law Enforcement Compliance Manual to ensure that law enforcement personnel are familiar with Yahoo!'s policies, procedures, and systems, and understand how to obtain information when investigating child exploitation cases. We also participate in ongoing training programs for law enforcement personnel who focus on protecting children in order to educate them on the function and operation of Yahoo! systems. We regularly participate in and/or sponsor a number of law enforcement training events, including the National ICAC Conference in 2005, 2006, and 2007; the San Jose ICAC Conference in 2004, 2005 and 2006; the Dallas Children Advocacy Center's Crimes Against Children Conference in 2007; and events for the American Prosecutor Research Institute.

In addition, Yahoo! has worked closely with the offices of a number of state attorneys general on child safety issues. In 2006, we partnered with the Attorneys General of Nebraska and New York to provide in-depth law enforcement training in those states. In 2007, we organized similar training sessions with the offices of the Texas, New Jersey, and Colorado Attorneys General. Yahoo! participated in Virginia Attorney General Bob McDonnell's Youth Internet Safety Task Force, and is currently a member of Washington Attorney General Rob McKenna's Task Force on Youth Internet Safety along with other representatives from industry, law enforcement, public interest groups and educators. Like Virginia, the Washington Task Force is working to make use of the Internet and related technologies safer for children by increasing Internet safety awareness and reviewing current laws related to child pornography and unlawful communications with minors.

2. Child Advocacy Groups

One example of our working relationship with child advocacy groups is the vital partnership Yahoo! has with i-SAFE, a non-profit organization dedicated to educating children about online safety. Our work with i-SAFE includes our sponsorship of the i-SAFE curriculum and training for students in Sunnyvale, where Yahoo! is headquartered, and the planned inclusion of an i-SAFE safety education video in our newest community product, Mash. In addition, Yahoo! has contributed cash and in-kind donations totaling more than \$1 million so far this year to sponsor the online child safety initiatives of organizations like NCMEC and other Internet safety organizations, such as iKeepSafe and Wired Safety. Our partnership with NCMEC involves providing advertising placement in sponsored search and network banners for NCMEC Public Service Announcements, hosting NCMEC's NetSmartz online safety content in Yahoo! Safely, and sponsoring NCMEC's annual Hope Awards and Congressional Breakfast. Yahoo! also sponsors ikeepsafe.org's partnership with D.A.R.E. to develop and distribute online safety training materials for D.A.R.E. officers internationally, and hosts iKeepsafe.org and i-SAFE.org content on microsites within Yahoo!. Further, on October 19th, Yahoo!, in partnership with the California Technology Assistance Project & Sunnyvale Police Department, will host "CyberCitizenship – a Summit on Internet Ethics and Safety" for education leaders across Northern California. The event, to be held at Yahoo!'s headquarters, will convene a dialogue among many of the country's leading Internet Safety experts, educators, local law enforcement and representatives from NCMEC and

the DOJ/Project Safe Childhood about safe and effective technology management within schools.

3. Industry Peers

Yahoo! works closely with its peers in the industry to combat child pornography and to protect children online. For example, in 2005, Yahoo! worked with other members of the USISPA and with NCMEC to develop the Sound Practices for Child Pornography Reporting. As I mentioned previously, Yahoo! partnered with AOL, Microsoft, Google, Earthlink and United Online to create the Technology Coalition to work on measures to better enable service providers to detect, report, and remove child pornography from their networks. We also work with the Financial Coalition to gain information that helps us improve our existing tools and procedures for ridding our network of child pornography.

III. Legislative Efforts

Yahoo! has made a concerted effort to protect children online. We are prepared to play our part in the effort to protect children online by creating tools our users can employ to protect themselves and by supporting efforts to educate children, parents, and communities about ways to use the Internet while staying safe. And we will continue to work with others in the industry to develop tools and educational resources aimed at protecting children online. However, while service providers can contribute by providing tools and educational resources, there are critical functions that government can perform more effectively than private industry. For example, monitoring sex offender behavior is a task that is most effectively performed by the government. Similarly, only judges can

evaluate the appropriateness of placing special conditions on offenders after release. One of my goals today is to share our perspective on where legislation could help enhance law enforcement agencies' and the courts' ability to perform essential government functions such as enforcement, sentencing, and monitoring functions to further promote child online safety.

In our view, there are four primary areas where government involvement could fill gaps in the existing public-private partnership to help fight child exploitation online. These areas are: (1) efforts to educate children, parents, and the public; (2) law enforcement tools; (3) governmental supervision of sex offenders; and (4) resources.

A. Education

Education is a critical component of our nation's online safety efforts, just as technology is a core part of our nation's education policy. Children, parents, and teachers need adequate guidance in order to safely and effectively interact online. While child safety is also an issue in offline environments, interactive media is becoming more mainstream, creating a timely opportunity to improve and expand online safety education. Teaching children how to use technology is now recognized as a vital component of their education. Teaching children to use technology *responsibly* helps them to become productive members of an increasingly "online" culture while keeping them safe.

Research shows that education is essential to combating online child predation. A recent study from the University of New Hampshire shows that a smaller percentage of youth are being solicited online than just a few years earlier, and a smaller proportion

seem to be communicating online with people they do not know in person.¹ According to the study, in 2000, approximately 1 in 5 (19%) of Internet users under 18 received unwanted sexual solicitations, and that number declined to 1 in 7 (13%) by 2005.² The percentage of persons under 18 who used the Internet to communicate with people they do not know decreased from 40% in 2000 to 34% in 2005. However, as the report notes, it is important to continue and expand efforts to send prevention messages, particularly those messages aimed at teens and preteens, to encourage safer online behavior.³

We believe that industry programs such as Yahoo! Safely and GetNetWise should be supplemented by government efforts to: 1) provide reliable information as a trusted source for parents and the public; 2) encourage online safety education in schools; and 3) provide education and training in online investigations and digital forensics for law enforcement.

Proposed legislation that would specifically further these education goals include H.R. 1008, introduced by Representative Melissa Bean, which would establish an Office of Internet Safety and Public Awareness within the Federal Trade Commission. Portions of S. 1965, introduced by Senator Ted Stevens, would also give the Federal Trade Commission a broader education role. The Federal Trade Commission has a long history of education on consumer protection issues, and extensive experience in focusing consumer attention to important issues that could be drawn upon to effectively educate the public about online safety. For example, the FTC could use some of its successful consumer campaigns, like the “Onguard Online” educational effort (designed to educate

¹ Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later, at 7. See http://www.missingkids.com/en_US/publications/NC167.pdf

² *Id.*

³ *Id.* at 59.

consumers about preventing Internet fraud and identity theft), as a model for creating campaigns to inform parents, children, and the general public about ways to stay safe online.

Finally, Representative Linda Sanchez has introduced H.R. 3577, which would direct the Attorney General to create and administer a grant program for organizations to provide Internet safety education programs to teach parents, children, teachers, and communities about how to recognize and prevent Internet dangers.

B. Procedural Tools

To enhance law enforcement's arsenal of tools to discover, investigate and prosecute child predators, Yahoo! supports changes to several current statutes to improve the ability of law enforcement to obtain successful prosecutions.

1. Changes to the Reporting Statute

First, we recommend the child pornography reporting statute, 42 U.S.C. § 13032, be revised to more explicitly define the obligations of electronic communications service providers to report child pornography and to ensure that providers have clear immunity for making those reports. Congress acted with great foresight in passing the reporting statute as part of the Protection of Children From Sexual Predators Act of 1998. Many major providers, including Yahoo!, have worked to implement systems to fulfill their obligations under the statute. However, the reporting obligations are not well defined. We suggest revising the statute to incorporate the U.S. Internet Service Providers' Association Sound Practices for Child Pornography Reporting. Adopting the Sound Practices will provide clarity and help smaller providers to better understand the types of

information NCMEC needs to successfully refer a report to law enforcement for investigation. The statute should also be amended to include a preemption clause to ensure a consistent national standard for reporting images to NCMEC, without potential state-by-state variations.

Second, the immunity provision in the current statute does not give providers clear immunity for transferring the actual illegal images to NCMEC to help law enforcement. The immunity provision should be revised to ensure that providers may transmit images to NCMEC without fearing potential liability for making their required reports. These two changes are part of the RESCUE Online Services Act, recently introduced by Representatives Christopher Carney and Steve Chabot and we recommend they be the centerpiece of legislation to improve the substantive and procedural laws relating to the investigation and prosecution of child pornography offenses.

2. Improving Investigative Techniques in Federal Statute

In addition to the changes to the reporting statutes, the federal statute relating to the crimes for which state authorities can obtain wiretaps, 18 U.S.C. § 2516(2), should be amended to permit state authorities to use this investigative tool in online sexual exploitation investigations. Declaring these offenses to be eligible for wiretap applications will remove a gap in the current statute and give state authorities an important investigative tool to combat crimes against minors. This change to investigative authority will parallel authority that exists for federal law enforcement. H.R. 3811, introduced by Representative Nick Lampson, would further this goal.

3. Increasing NCMEC's Authority

Yahoo! supports proposals to give NCMEC more authority to make international referrals, issue preservation requests, and share information with service providers and technology companies regarding child pornography. The exploitation of children is a worldwide problem, as evidenced by the number of large, well-organized international child pornography distribution rings that have been discovered.⁴ By giving NCMEC the authority to make referrals to international law enforcement agencies, NCMEC can work with law enforcement around the world to combat the exploitation of children wherever it occurs. Cooperation with law enforcement in other countries will not only enable NCMEC to share information about crimes against children outside the United States, but will also encourage those agencies to share key information for investigating and prosecuting crimes involving the exploitation of children with domestic law enforcement agencies.

Giving law enforcement agents detailed to NCMEC the responsibility to quickly issue preservation requests to service providers after a case is referred for investigation to an Internet Crimes Against Children taskforce is another targeted and effective way to ensure that specific information critical to child pornography investigations is preserved early in the investigative process. Because NCMEC is mandated to receive child pornography reports from service providers, agents detailed to NCMEC are in a unique position to quickly identify those situations in which preservation of information is necessary and issue requests to providers. In addition, because of the analysis that NCMEC performs on such reports, any additional providers, beyond the reporting provider, who may hold information could also be sent a preservation request. NCMEC

⁴ “Austrian Police Uncover Global Porn Ring,; MSNBC.com, February 7, 2007 at <http://www.msnbc.com/id/17022345> (last visited October 14, 2007); Gretchen Ruethling, “27 Charged in International Online Child Pornography Ring,” The New York Times, March 16, 2006, page A18.

will then be able to report to the law enforcement agencies who receive referrals that the key information has been preserved, thus eliminating any delays during which evidence could be deleted.

Yahoo! also supports authorizing NCMEC to share information related to child pornography with service providers and technology companies to assist in the development of technologies and tools to thwart the distribution of child pornography and to keep children safe online. Many service providers, such as Yahoo!, have already devoted resources to developing tools and procedures to stop the dissemination of child pornography. Enabling NCMEC to share information would help service providers and technology companies to design and implement tools and procedures to effectively identify and combat the ever-evolving methods used by criminals to exploit children online and disseminate child pornography. This would also further the goals of the industry technology coalitions working to end distribution of child pornography.

We encourage the committee to support a provision of the recently introduced RESCUE Online Services Act to provide more immediate preservation through law enforcement agents assigned to NCMEC, and to consider proposals in the additional areas we've outlined.

C. Enhanced Governance of Offenders

Yahoo! would also like to address the sentencing and post-release monitoring of sex offenders. As I stated previously, there are some capabilities, such as creating tools consumers can use to protect themselves and providing education about safe online behavior, that service providers can effectively provide. However, other critical functions, such as sentencing and monitoring can be most effectively performed by the government.

Additional resources, training and legal authority for sex offender monitoring may help strengthen the capabilities of those who are best equipped to evaluate the overall risk presented to the community by a specific offender, giving them tools to both create and enforce restrictions designed to minimize that risk. Even in the Internet context, the experts are the judges who sentence the offenders and the parole and probation officers who oversee the offenders during their supervised release, not the ISPs who may provide their Internet services.

1. Sentencing

If Congress would like to enhance the government's oversight of sex offenders, we recommend that Congress consider expanding current federal sentencing guidelines to provide more guidance for judges on the imposition of special release conditions for sex offenders to include varying levels of monitoring of and restrictions on Internet use. Sentencing judges and probation officers are best situated to determine whether certain special conditions of supervised release, such as restrictions on Internet use, should be applied, and how severe those restrictions should be. Adding a variety of suggested conditions to the sentencing guidelines will encourage judges to consider imposing restrictions on the sex offender's use of technologies when appropriate, while obtaining valid data to inform future public policy decisions. For example, the Adam Walsh Act calls for the Attorney General to conduct a study to evaluate the effectiveness of monitoring and restricting activities of sex offenders, including the effectiveness of restrictions limiting access to the Internet.⁵ Until the Attorney General's study is complete,

⁵ Title VI, Subtitle C, §(C)(2), Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, Pub. L. No. 109-248, 120 Stat. 587 (2006).

these potential conditions are merely recommended. However, upon completion of the study and depending on its findings, Congress may consider making one or more of these conditions mandatory in subsequent legislation.

2. Monitoring

Monitoring sex offenders so that they are not a danger to society is an important component of keeping children safe online and in the real world, especially given the risk of recidivism. These concerns prompted the passage of the Adam Walsh Act in 2006 and have also inspired subsequent legislative efforts. This is an area where there are no easy answers. While full implementation of the Adam Walsh Act is an important first step towards improving the sex offender oversight system, there are other measures that could make the system even more effective.

Yahoo! recommends that Congress consider focusing legislative efforts on empowering parole and probation officers to monitor any Internet restrictions placed on sex offenders after their release. In order to perform this function, parole and probation officers would need to have the proper tools and training to allow them to either electronically monitor an offender's online activity remotely or to conduct forensic examination of a sex offender's computer for signs of inappropriate activity. The technology to perform this monitoring exists today. However, Congress could help make a difference in this area by giving additional guidance that: (1) Internet restrictions should be imposed on offenders who commit crimes against children online; (2) parole and probation officers are the first line of defense against violation of those restrictions as well as other violations of

conditions of parole; and (3) the necessary training, tools, and resources should be allocated for this work to be performed effectively.

Yahoo! also recommends the Committee consider amending existing law, 42 U.S.C. § 16919, to require that all sex offenders convicted of crimes involving a minor check in with their parole officers every 90 days. Such mandatory reporting may allow parole officers to identify any potential irregularities or warning signs from those sex offenders most likely to put a child at risk.

Yahoo! encourages the committee to examine this targeted approach to monitoring the post-release activities of sex offenders and enforcing any special conditions imposed on sex offenders as part of their sentence. We believe that, out of all the proposals being discussed today, working closely with law enforcement and giving them greater tools will, in the end, be the most effective strategy. Importantly, this proposal will not result in ensnaring innocent bystanders from the broader Internet population who may be falsely identified as sex offenders.

D. Resources

Finally, providing sufficient funding to carry out the initiatives passed by Congress is the key to making any policy work. Yahoo! believes that: 1) funding Project Safe Childhood under the Adam Walsh Act⁶ at the authorized level of \$47 million is enormously important; 2) DoJ, NCMEC and other Internet Safety programs should receive appropriate funding in addition to authorizations passed by Congress last year; 3) ICAC funding should be increased to \$25 million per year to meet the goals of expansion

⁶ Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, Pub. L. No. 109-248, 120 Stat. 587 (2006).

envisioned under the Adam Walsh Act; and 4) appropriate funding for the adequate management of sex offenders should be allocated.

Obviously, Congress must make choices between and among many worthy programs each year. Based on my experience in working with law enforcement, providing additional resources to the ICACs in particular will yield vast improvements in the ability to bring additional prosecutions of child predators building on their excellent work to date. While the ICAC task forces are able to investigate many of the child pornography incidents reported to NCMEC, the cases represent a heavy load for the federal, state and local law enforcement personnel that make up these squads. Providing additional funding for the ICACs would enable them to investigate and prosecute even more cases.

As Chris Swecker, the Acting Assistant Executive Director of the FBI testified before a House subcommittee in April 2006:

SWECKER: I'd also, again, just beat the drum for the forensic laboratories, because, again, that is a choke point when it comes to the forensic analysis. We have the laws, but we need the training. We need to export the training to state and local level at a much faster pace.⁷

Additional funding would enable more investigators to attend training, while expanding the training to address a broader range of technical issues critical to law enforcement efforts to prevent and investigate offenses against children. We urge the committee to support H.R. 2797, introduced by Rep. Bobby Scott, which would provide additional law enforcement grants for law enforcement training, research support, public education programs, and the establishment of regional training centers with the aim of improving

⁷ Sexual Exploitation of Children Through The Internet: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, 109th Cong., April 6, 2006.

the identification, investigation, and prosecution of certain crimes, including cybercrimes against children. We also urge your support of the PROTECT Act, recently introduced by Representative Debbie Wasserman-Schultz, which would authorize funding for an ICAC grant program, increased federal agents and increased forensic capacity. In addition, we support provisions of H.R. 837, introduced by Representative Lamar Smith, encouraging funding for the Innocent Images program, and H.R. 876, introduced by Representatives Steve Chabot and Nick Lampson to authorize \$25 million for ICACs. Yahoo! also believes funds to train parole and probation officers to monitor offender online activity may be needed.

It is heartening to see the commitment to authorizing these funds. We are hopeful that, as the appropriations process continues, we will see strategic funding for programs in this area.

Conclusion

Yahoo! is pleased to be among the witnesses at this hearing who are taking decisive action to fight child exploitation online. Though we are proud of the contributions we have made towards keeping children safe online, we know there is much more to be done. We recognize our shared responsibility to address this important issue and pledge to continue our commitment to protecting children online. In addition, we look forward to working with the Committee on legislation Yahoo! can eagerly support to advance the fight against child predation. Thank you.