

By: Truitt

H.C.R. No. 54

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, The Internet is an extraordinary tool by which to  
2 exchange information, and it has become increasingly integral to  
3 modern society; yet for children and youth, who make up a large  
4 portion of its users, the Internet is fraught with risk; and

5           WHEREAS, Not only do the majority of American adults use the  
6 Internet, but some 93 percent of youth ages 12 to 17 and more than 20  
7 percent of children as young as three years old are online; a study  
8 published in 2005 by the Children's Digital Media Center found that  
9 children seeking pornography will "find it all over the Internet,"  
10 and children who are not seeking pornography are often  
11 inadvertently exposed to it; and

12           WHEREAS, Although most parents have rules about which  
13 Internet websites their children can and cannot visit, the  
14 pervasiveness of Internet pornography makes it almost impossible  
15 for parental oversight alone to prevent exposure; additionally,  
16 many parents use Internet filters, but several studies have shown  
17 that filters are not effective at blocking obscene content and that  
18 they can be easily disabled by tech-savvy youth; and

19           WHEREAS, The adult website industry, for its part, sometimes  
20 uses credit card verification systems to restrict access by minors;  
21 this method is considered severely limited for a variety of  
22 reasons, including the fact that some children have access to  
23 credit cards; moreover, even when adult websites use credit card  
24 verification systems, they often continue to offer sexually

1 explicit images for free; and

2 WHEREAS, Congressional efforts to protect children from  
3 harmful sexual material on the Internet have thus far failed; the  
4 Communications Decency Act of 1996 was struck down by the Supreme  
5 Court the following year, and a federal district court issued a  
6 permanent injunction against the Child Online Protection Act of  
7 1998; lawmakers continue to propose legislation, but meanwhile  
8 parents must rely on the imperfect solutions offered by private  
9 self-regulation to safeguard their children from Internet  
10 pornography; and

11 WHEREAS, A generation of children and youth are being exposed  
12 to sexually explicit online content that is intended for an adult  
13 audience; parents have a right to determine what material is  
14 acceptable and accessible in their home, and the United States  
15 government has the ability to provide them with effective policies  
16 and better options than what are currently available for protecting  
17 their families; now, therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas  
19 hereby respectfully urge the United States Congress to enact  
20 legislation facilitating a technology-based solution that allows  
21 consumers to subscribe to Internet services that exclude adult  
22 content; and, be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official  
24 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, the  
25 speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the  
26 senate of the United States Congress, and all the members of the  
27 Texas delegation to the congress with the request that this

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1 resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a  
2 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.