

Committee on Energy and Commerce

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Member Yvette D. Clarke**

Markup of 18 Bills, Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade

December 11, 2025

Good morning and thank you Chairman Bilirakis, and Ranking Member Schakowsky for holding this markup today.

Last week during our legislative hearing on kids' online safety I raised my concern over what I see as a bad faith attempt at keeping people safe online. My colleagues on the right are sitting here today, pretending to take action to keep kids safe online, while they simultaneously dismantle the FTC and entertain the idea of an AI moratorium or preemption of state AI laws.

I cannot make it clearer that it would be detrimental for Congress to put any kind of ceiling on kids safety and privacy through a moratorium or preemption as we know technology changes every day. When new tech emerges, so do new harms and scams, and frankly, right now I do not think we are doing our best to stop enabling scammers and giving handouts to Big Tech. The best solution to protect kids online is a federal data privacy standard that we can build off and include additional protection for children and teens.

So far this year, all 50 states introduced legislation on AI while Republicans in Congress offered no federal alternative other than preemption. As I've said before, it is no mistake that the only Republican proposal frees AI and Big Tech companies from all oversight. Without a comprehensive federal standard, existing state laws are the only legislation keeping kids safe online right now.

The next steps are clear, to properly protect Americans online, we need a fully staffed FTC, we need to get over this preemption fad, and we need to start working on a comprehensive federal privacy standard. I implore my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to take the time ahead of a full committee markup to put the partisan back and forth to rest and get serious about a federal privacy standard. Until then, no one is safe online.

I yield back.