

Committee on Energy and Commerce

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Member Janice D. Schakowsky**

Markup of 9 Bills, Full Committee

March 5, 2026

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the families and parents who are here with us today. I especially want to acknowledge those in this room who have endured the unimaginable loss of a child. Your presence here matters, your advocacy matters, and your voices should be at the center of this conversation.

It is Congress's responsibility to protect kids online, and we are failing to meet that responsibility. That failure is not abstract. It has real consequences for real families. Kids have literally died as a result of Big Tech's choices, design decisions, and business incentives. When platforms build products that maximize engagement at any cost, when they ignore foreseeable harms, and when they resist meaningful accountability, children and families are the ones who pay the price.

That is why this debate cannot be about doing the bare minimum. The parents and families who have come here today are not asking us for a watered-down response. They are asking us to do better, to be stronger, and to finally pass legislation that is actually relevant to the harms their children have faced. We need to hear directly from these families, understand what happened, and build legislation that responds to the real dangers kids are experiencing online every day.

Unfortunately, today's bills are still weak. They do not yet meet the scale or urgency of the crisis before us. We should not slim down our response when the stakes are this high. We should not settle for half-measures when families have already paid the ultimate price. Congress can do better, and I believe Congress must do better.

I know there are members on this side of the aisle who believe we can produce something stronger, smarter, and more meaningful. I am looking forward to the real bill — one that truly accounts for the families who have suffered the worst loss imaginable, one that matches the seriousness of this moment, and one that finally puts the safety of children ahead of the interests of powerful technology companies.

For those reasons, I urge my colleagues to oppose these bills, and I yield back.