



# Legislative Factsheet: Device Filters

Protecting children from harmful images online;  
requiring manufacturers  
to default filters to "ON" rather than "OFF"

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## Problem:

Adolescent and preteen children are consuming hard core pornography with unfiltered internet accessible devices. Pornography is a highly addictive agent and children are especially vulnerable; for many, it serves as their sex education.

A nationally representative survey found that **64% of young people, ages 13–24, actively seek out pornography weekly or more often.**

Porn consumption continues to be an issue as the Navigators Christian Ministry at Clemson University reports most men and 25%-30% of women students in Navigators struggle with pornography addiction.

## Solution:

Virtually all internet accessible devices are manufactured with built in filtering capabilities and parental control features, but the filters are defaulted to "OFF."

**Default to "ON":** This legislation mandates that devices be manufactured with their current adult material filters default to "ON" (rather than the current default of "OFF") when activated in South Carolina. **Geofencing Capability:** Devices already know our location and have filters.

This feature, when paired with the capability to match location with a state by state table, can be used to filter out adult material in states with a filter law. This adaptation is currently used by foreign countries to filter out web sites deemed objectionable by the state.

Analysis found that children who disclosed exposure to pornography were at 3.3 times greater likelihood of engaging in problem sexualized behavior (PSB) compared to those who did not disclose pornography exposure.

Without this legislation it is not possible for parents to effectively protect their children from the massive amounts of harmful material inundating them online.  
~ National Center on Sexual Exploitation

## Why Filters?

- Devices are currently manufactured with filters built in but defaulted to "OFF."
- Parents / guardians find turning the filters "ON" to be very burdensome; default "ON" rather than default "OFF" addresses this.
- With the "ON" default, parents / guardians may control access to speech harmful to children.
- Placing filters on the device itself, instead of on the network, protects minors on the internet wherever the device is used.

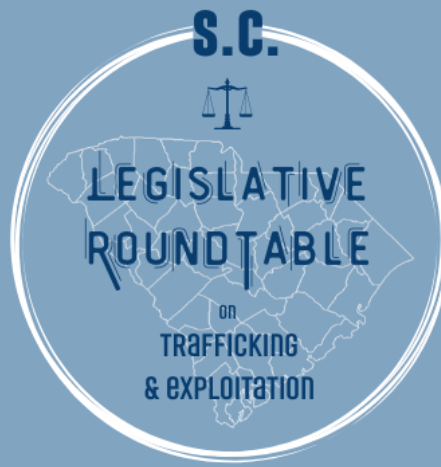
## Free Speech?

- This legislation does not restrict adult access to speech as it filters speech at the device-level rather than universally restricting the source internet.
- Adults may elect to consume pornography by deactivating the filters on the device with a passcode.
- This legislation allows the state to mandate the use of filters while empowering parents to determine what material is appropriate for their children.

## Interest & Parties

- This legislation is a necessary incremental step in advancing South Carolina's legitimate interest to protect our children from harmful online materials without restricting adult access to protected speech.
- Parents, guardians, and the S.C. Attorney General will be able to bring civil actions against: adults who deactivate filters on devices used by minors and manufacturers of devices that do not comply.

Created in partnership with the [National Center on Sexual Exploitation](#) and [Protect Young Eyes](#)  
Sources: National Center on Sexual Exploitation (NCOSE) and Protect Young Eyes; notably: *Pornography and Public Health Research Summary* by NCOSE - [https://endsexualexploitation.org/wp-content/uploads/NCOSE\\_Pornography-PublicHealth\\_ResearchSummary\\_1-14-19\\_FINAL.pdf](https://endsexualexploitation.org/wp-content/uploads/NCOSE_Pornography-PublicHealth_ResearchSummary_1-14-19_FINAL.pdf)



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## Roundtable Members



Fresh Start, Healing Heart



The S.C. Legislative Roundtable on Trafficking and Exploitation is a South Carolina Association of non-profits combatting human trafficking and exploitation.