## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 21-22 November 2023 Item 5-N

Canadian Conference-Catholic 2500 Don Reid Dr Ottawa, ON K1H2J2





Arnold Viersen, MP Peace River-Westlock

October 12, 2023

Dear Canadian Conference-Catholic,

Since being elected, I have worked to fight against the sexual exploitation of children. In 2016, I introduced Motion M-47, urging the Health Committee to investigate the impact of violent and degrading pornography on children and adults.

Motion-47 was adopted and during the Health Committee study, experts revealed that the average age of first exposure was 11 years of age. Further, pornography normalizes sexual violence against women and perpetuates addictive behaviors among youth. The number one recommendation from child advocates and health experts was for pornographic companies to implement meaningful age verification. It is a simple but effective method of protecting kids online.

Today 1 am pleased to tell you about Bill S-210 (*Protecting Young Persons from Exposure to Pornography Act*), spearheaded by Senator Julie Miville-Dechene. This Bill will safeguard children from the harmful effects of violent and degrading pornography by requiring companies to implement meaningful age verification measures on their websites. After successfully passing the Senate this spring, Bill S-210 will be up for debate this fall in the House of Commons, sponsored by MP Karen Vecchio.

Bill S-210 is in the final stages of becoming law and we need support from as many Members of Parliament as possible to ensure its successful passage. Bill S-210 represents a critical step forward in protecting our children from the perils of an increasingly dangerous online world by ensuring that companies do not allow children to access pornography.

I humbly request your assistance in this endeavor. Here's how you can help:

- I. Gather 50 signatures using the attached petition.
- 2. Arrange a meeting with your Member of Parliament to discuss the significance of Bill S-210.
- 3. Encourage your Member of Parliament to present the petition to the House of Commons.
- 4. Request your Member of Parliament to cast a vote in favour of Bill S-210.

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Alberta Office

## PETITION TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

## Petition to adopt Bill S-210

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED RESIDENTS OF CANADA, draw the attention of the House to the following:

WHEREAS sexually explicit material - including demeaning material and material depicting sexual violence - can be easily accessed on the Internet by young persons; WHEREAS a significant proportion of the sexually explicit material accessed online is made available on the Internet for commercial purposes and is not protected by any effective age-verification method;

WHEREAS the consumption of sexually explicit material by young persons is associated with a range of serious harms, including the development of pornography addiction, the reinforcement of gender stereotypes and the development of attitudes favourable to harassment and violence - including sexual harassment and sexual violence - particularly against women;

WHEREAS Parliament recognizes that the harmful effect of the increasing accessibility of sexually explicit material online for young persons is an important public health and public safety concern;

WHEREAS online age-verification technology is increasingly sophisticated and can now effectively ascertain the age of users without breaching their privacy rights; WHEREAS anyone making sexually explicit material available on the Internet for commercial purposes has a responsibility to ensure that it is not accessed by young persons; WHEREAS on line age-verification was the primary recommendation made by stakeholders during a 2017 study by the Standing Committee on Health;

THEREFORE your petitioners call upon the House of Commons to adopt Bill S-210, Protecting Young Persons from Exposure to Pornography Act.

NAME (Please Print)	MAILING ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
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