

S. 2051, Missing Children's Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2023

Sens. Durbin and Graham

BACKGROUND

Protecting our country's most vulnerable children has long been a national priority. That's why Congress passed the *Missing Children's Assistance Act* (MCAA) in 1984 to provide federal coordination of state and local efforts to recover and support missing and exploited children.

Since the enactment of the MCAA in 1984, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) has served as the national resource center to find missing children, reduce child sexual exploitation, and prevent child victimization.

Today, NCMEC operates as a unique public-private partnership – working with families, law enforcement, schools, community leaders, and nonprofits. In 2023, NCMEC received 148,695 calls and the organization assisted law enforcement, families and child welfare with 28,886 cases of missing children, and recovered 88 percent of those cases.

SUMMARY

The *Missing Children's Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2023* is bipartisan legislation that renews the MCAA through Fiscal Year 2028 and takes critical steps in helping NCMEC better respond to crises and crimes affecting children across the country. The House companion bill, H.R. 5224, was introduced by Reps. Aaron Bean (R-FL) and Joe Courtney (D-CT).

Specifically, S. 2051 would improve NCMEC's ability to:

- Assist law enforcement to identify, locate, and recover missing and exploited children;
- Develop educational materials to reduce the risk of child sex trafficking, online enticement, sexual extortion, and cyberbullying;
- Provide education and technical assistance on conducting background checks on individuals working with children;
- Offer support services to missing and exploited children and their families; and
- Facilitate requests to have child sexual abuse material removed from the internet.

BOTTOM LINE

The Education and the Workforce Committee is working to ensure NCMEC has the tools to protect America's most vulnerable children.