

Family Online Safety Institute Applauds Congressional Efforts to Protect Children on the Internet

House and Senate pass bill for national online safety awareness campaign

WASHINGTON - In response to the passage of Senate Bill 1492, which directs the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to build a public awareness campaign to promote online safety tactics to protect children on the Internet, while also setting up a working group on the issue, CEO of the Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI), Stephen Balkam, made the following statement:

"I applaud Congress on passing this very important legislation focused on protecting our children in an often all-encompassing online world. The House and Senate have worked together to establish a national plan to keep our children safe online. We hope that this national awareness campaign will better educate parents and teachers to give our young students guidance on the Internet. Additionally, the creation of an Online Safety and Technology working group will bring together the key leaders from industry, non profits and other interested groups devoted to this issue to tackle the moving target of protecting kids online. As a leader in this field, FOSI believes Congress is taking the necessary leadership to keep our kids and families safe online."

Stephen Balkam is the founding CEO of the Family Online Safety Institute, a leading international organization on online safety. FOSI aims to identify and promote best practice, tools and methods in the field of online safety. The Institute's work includes the development of the Internet Content Rating Association (ICRA) family of products and services, online safety events, public policy and public education.

Prior to this, Stephen was the founder and CEO of the ICRA and the Recreational Software Advisory Council, where he led the creation of the world's leading content description system for digital content. In addition, he has run three other non-profit organizations and ran his own consultancy business. Stephen won the 1998 Carl Bertelsmann Prize in Gütersloh, Germany, for innovation and responsibility in the Information Society. And he was named one of the Top 50 UK Movers and Shakers, Internet Magazine, 2001.

The FOSI Annual Conference *Safe at any Speed: Rules, Tools & Public Policies to Keep Kids Safe Online* will be held in Washington, DC on December 11, 2008 at the Newseum.