

ASOP Global Statement on New Section 230 Reform Bill
“See Something Say Something Online Act” Introduced by Senators Manchin and Cornyn

WASHINGTON – September 29, 2020 – The Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP Global) issued the following statement in response to the introduction today of the *See Something Say Something Online Act* by Senators Joe Manchin (D-WV) and John Cornyn (R-TX):

With today’s bill introduction, Senators Manchin and Cornyn have made good on longstanding promises to protect consumers from the illegal online sale and advertisement of controlled substances, such as opioids. ASOP Global endorses the legislation and thanks Senators Manchin and Cornyn for specifically seeking to address illegal online drug sales in addition to other serious crimes.

ASOP Global commends Manchin’s and Cornyn’s leadership in bringing forward a bill that would require companies protected under Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act – including interactive computer service providers like search, social, marketplace, domain name registries and registrars – to report to the Justice Department any user activity detected on their services that could be linked to a serious crime. With an estimated 35,000 online pharmacies operating at any given time, and more than 96% of those operating illegally, this legislation is critical to promote public health and safety on the internet – particularly as the nation works to respond the pandemic and ongoing opioid epidemic.

Initially meant to safeguard free speech online, outdated Section 230 protections have failed for years to address pervasive, harmful, and potentially deadly online content that Section 230’s authors could have never envisioned at the dawn of the Internet nearly a quarter of a century ago. With no accountability for the content published via their platforms, internet intermediaries enable the spread illegal and dangerous activity online – including drug sales, terrorist propaganda and child sexual abuse material.

Since 2009, ASOP Global has been advocating for policies to address the rampant online sale of illicit and counterfeit medications, now fueling both the spread of COVID-19 fraud and the nation’s opioid crisis. *The See Something Say Something Online Act* is a major step in the direction of the online accountability that ASOP Global has been urging for more than a decade.

The *See Something Say Something Online Act* follows the introduction of several other Section 230-focused bills that have garnered bipartisan support. ASOP Global is encouraged by the focus on better protecting patients and consumers online and holding platforms accountable for the illegal activity online. We applaud Sens. Manchin and Cornyn for their bold, bipartisan approach to curtailing illegal activity and protecting patients online.

ASOP Global is committed to continuing to serve as a resource to Congress as they work diligently to curb the illegal sale of controlled substances and other prescription drugs online appearing in search results, social media and online marketplaces. We strongly support efforts to hold the internet industry accountable for its critical role in Americans’ health and safety online.

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ABOUT ASOP GLOBAL

The Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP Global), a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. with activities in U.S., Canada, Europe, Latin America and Asia, is dedicated to protecting consumers around the world, ensuring safe access to medications, and combating illegal online drug sellers.