

ASOP Global Applauds Senate Commerce Subcommittee for Highlighting the Dangers of Online Counterfeit Drugs

WASHINGTON, D.C. – October 26, 2021 – The Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP Global) applauds the Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, and Data Security for calling attention to the dangers of deadly drugs easily obtained online. Specifically, Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) pressed Snapchat on drug dealers using the platform, demanding, “are you going to get drugs off Snapchat?”

Senators from both sides of the aisle compelled tech companies Snap Inc., TikTok, and YouTube to bolster protections on their platforms. We agree with the bipartisan members in Congress who recognize the need for Section 230 reform to ensure these platforms are held liable for the illegal actions happening on their sites.

While much of today’s hearing explored privacy and peer pressure that creates an unsafe online environment for children and teens, these sites also threaten their health by providing access to dangerous products. Illegal online drug sellers offer counterfeit, adulterated, unapproved, and/or misbranded products through websites and social media platforms, that in some cases are lethal. The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) reports that more than 9.5 million counterfeit pills have been seized so far this year--2021--which is more than the last two years combined. Fake pills often contain fentanyl and are more lethal than ever before. The number of DEA-seized counterfeit pills with fentanyl has jumped nearly 430 percent since 2019.

The hearing highlighted two families who lost their children to fentanyl-laced pills sold illegally on Snapchat. Unfortunately, this occurrence is all too familiar; ASOP works with families across the country who have faced the same tragedy. Their lived experience is a heartbreaking but invaluable reminder of the urgent need for federal policies that ensure accountability and transparency on the internet. Congress must continue to examine ways to better safeguard children and teens from dangers online.

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The Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP Global), a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. with activities in the 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.