



GREGORY S. ZYBURT
MARQUETTE COUNTY SHERIFF

LOWELL A. LARSON
UNDERSHERIFF

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December 4, 2025

Dear Members of the House Energy & Commerce Committee,

As Sheriff of Marquette County, I write to express my support for the App Store Accountability Act (H.R. 3149). National studies show that children and teen spend more time online than any other previous generation and use dozens of apps each week, far more than any parent can monitor. Predators exploit that reality, using apps, chat features, and gaming or social media platforms to contact minors anonymously.

In Marquette County, investigators found this exact pattern – a predatory scheme beginning online, extending into exploitation and ending in tragedy for our community. Often, by the time law enforcement is alerted, the damage caused to families and children is already done and no criminal sentence can restore what was lost. Last year, the ICAC (Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force) program reviewed 203,000 investigations that resulted in 12,600 arrests. I believe a solution must come federally in the form of the App Store Accountability Act.

The App Store Accountability Act would require app stores to verify a user's age, obtain verifiable parental consent before minors can download or purchase apps, and enforce standardized age rating. These measures give parents a clear control point - a digital "front door lock" - before dangerous content or contact ever reaches a child's device.

The dangers are evident and urgent. Cases like the Marquette sextortion ring show just how quickly innocent online interactions can devolve into catastrophic outcomes. This legislation is a practical, commonsense step to help our children across Michigan and the nation.

Please reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gregory S. Zyburt".

Gregory S. Zyburt
Sheriff