
Public Meeting

of

ASSEMBLY ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN

*“Testimony on issues relating to the safety of children
including Internet use and other related matters”*

LOCATION: Committee Room 3
State House Annex
Trenton, New Jersey

DATE: March 12, 2001
2:00 p.m.

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Rose Marie Heck, Chairwoman
Assemblyman E. Scott Garrett
Assemblyman George F. Geist
Assemblywoman Linda R. Greenstein
Assemblywoman Nellie Pou



ALSO PRESENT:

Miriam Bavati
*Office of Legislative Services
Council Aide*

Deborah K. Smarth
*Assembly Majority
Council Aide*

Christine Scullion
*Assembly Democratic
Council Aide*

***Hearing Recorded and Transcribed by
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ASSEMBLYWOMAN ROSE MARIE HECK (Chairwoman):

We're going to begin, and I'm going to tell you that everyone had said they were coming, and they're not here. Just because the sun shines doesn't mean that everybody should take a break from this important work. I really mean that. It's a very important piece of information that we need to acquire so that we can move ahead in a positive way. There are so many things happening out there, and we have to consult with the public at large.

And I know that-- I'm shocked somewhat that the NJEA has not sent anyone to be here today. I thought in lieu of what occurred last week we'd be hearing a lot of requests for some assistance in a lot of areas, and apparently, we're not getting them to do that. I did speak to our representatives of the NJEA, and they said they were trying to get people here now. It is a big organization, and I would assume that they could have sent something in writing. Maybe they're being ultra careful because of what's been happening. But I do believe unless we communicate with one another, our problems will just continue.

I'm going to make my own statements as far as safety is concerned. I know that all of us here-- Nellie has been very actively involved in the welfare of children and parents. And as you know, she was the Human Services Director of Paterson, New Jersey. And she has been one of our very faithful attendees at the Women's Advisory Council, as has Scott Garrett. And George Geist is a new member, but has always been interested in the same issues we have dealt with over the years and has put bills in on his own, protecting children and families. That's very important to me.

I will tell you that I've had occasion to speak before groups in the recent past, and as many of you know, we held three Children's Summits: one

in October in Salem County, one in November at UMDNJ in New Brunswick -- I'm sorry -- in November it was Hackensack, and UMDNJ was December. And we have learned a lot since that time. And one of the things that keeps occurring is the fact that children need our attention at so many levels, beginning with our being parents. That's so very, very important. Children need to be listened to, and they need time to spend with people who give them a good example -- their children, their grandparents, their teachers, and mentors in the community, very, very important.

And we see that there is no substitute for love and attention and nurturing. And we want to, through these safety pieces, concern ourselves with the well-being of children and the fact that we have to keep our children safe, not just a couple of days when it's in the news, but all year round. We've all been aware that our juvenile crime has increased, and a lot of those children need a helping hand and some programs to help them along. We've been working on special education programs. We're now saying special education as it applies to rehabilitation in our juvenile centers. We were able, through the Governor's help last year bringing this to her attention, that there was a wonderful program in Ringwood at the Green juvenile school, which taught children how to read, how to write. And one of the programs put together a creative writing skill project which ended up in performing -- writing and performing, directing a play at the Madison theater. She was able to give us \$90,000 for that program to continue and to grow this year. It only cost \$1000 per child for two sessions a week for an entire semester. A year, I believe -- more than a semester.

So he called me, John Pietrowski, the president of the New Jersey Playwrights Association, and told me there are four programs now with that

\$90,000: one there, one in Warren County, close to you Scott, you know, your district maybe, close to your district--

ASSEMBLYMAN GARRETT: Could be my district.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes, could be.

And one in Elizabeth and one in Newark. So I was very pleased to hear that, because it is a much needed program. And he then gave us another assignment, guys, that we now should be looking for money for follow-through when they leave the programs, because many of them go back to a very difficult situation. When they graduate, they go back to the area where the problems arose. So we have to give them some kind of support system out there.

One of the things we learned through the Women's Advisory Council, through the Children's Summit, that children need our help, not only for working rehabilitation, but for prevention. We learned through the summits-- The first thing that we learned of major import is that 15 percent of our children in education are dyslexic. And then through the Corrections Department, depending on the prison, 40 percent to 50 percent are dyslexic and have reading difficulties. These all give kind of a red flag sign that reading -- the ability to read, the ability to write is so very important to a very young child, and when they enter school to find out that there is a reading problem in the third or fourth grade puts those children so far behind that they develop those -- the anger, the low self-esteem, the behavioral problems.

And through Dr. Robert Hendren and Dr. Finkel and Dr. Gottlieb (phonetic spelling), all involved in pediatrics or behavioral sciences-- They have told us that there are ways and means to change the behavior of children

through a variety of means that they have discovered through the neurological sciences.

So we're headed in a good direction, but we have to have involvement of all of you to tell us where the hot spots are, where we should be focusing our attention. I know the Union County Prosecutor helped us a great deal the last time, and hopefully, we're going to have a lot more help from you again. I'm very pleased that you took time to come again. It's very important to us, and I'm sure to the people that you serve.

And I'm going to ask you, Thomas Manahan, to come forward and give us some more testimony.

THOMAS MANAHAN, ESQ.: With your permission, I'd also like to invite, Madam Chairperson, two members of my office who came today, in case the committee has any questions of them. I have Assistant Prosecutor Anne Frawley, who heads our Special Prosecutions Unit; and Lieutenant Patricia Leonard, who is the Commander of the Special Prosecutions Unit; both of whom oversee our High-Tech Crimes Unit in our office.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes, please.

MR. MANAHAN: So, in case the committee had any questions of them--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Just pull up another chair for them.

MR. MANAHAN: Yes.

They were actually hoping I wouldn't introduce them, but I insisted that they come up. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Well, I think your experiences are so important to us, you know, to document and to use as a resource.

MR. MANAHAN: I want to thank you very much, Madam Chairperson, members of the Assembly, and members of this committee, for giving me the opportunity again to appear. I specifically, as I understand it, was asked to appear to talk about a course that my office has offered and will continue to offer to parents dealing with the Internet and your child.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MR. MANAHAN: But if I could make some preliminary remarks, if I might?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Please.

MR. MANAHAN: A few years back, Joseph Califano, who was the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, was talking about the problems with drugs and our young people, which is still a problem today.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I'm glad you're mentioning him. He's a relative, but go ahead.

MR. MANAHAN: I didn't know that. But Mr. Califano was talking about the drug epidemic at that time, which as I said, unfortunately, still exists. And I think his words are very appropriate when we talk about the problem of the Internet and our children. To paraphrase Mr. Califano or Secretary Califano, "It's not whether or not our children using the Internet are going to be thrown into dangerous seas, because they are. The issue is how well we can teach them how to swim." And that's why -- what this committee is doing is very important, because we-- All of us as parents or grandparents or-- We have children who need a swimming lesson. And part of what we are trying to do in Union County is, and hopefully it will go statewide, is to teach parents how to teach their children how to swim.

Some just basic facts. Approximately 25 million children today use the Internet. Just four years ago, in 1997, that number was 8 million. Of the children that use the Internet, the vast majority of them use that Internet alone in the so-called privacy of their home or in a library or in a school. Of those, at least 1 in 33, based upon a congressional study, received or were the target of an aggressive sexual solicitation -- someone who asked to meet them, who called them, sent them mail, money, or even gifts.

I say that, because what really captures the headlines when we talk about Internet safety is sexual exploitation of our children, but I think that recent events have pointed out that there are many other dangers out there. Recently in Essex County, a neighboring county, there were some students who engaged in a bomb threat in the school, and it appeared as though they had the present capability of carrying that out, based upon what they had learned over the Internet. So the fact that a parent or parents might say, "Well, I'm not concerned, because there don't seem to be a lot of weapons, in the traditional sense, available to our children," the Internet does provide a weapon to those who would wreak this havoc in such a way as teaching them how to make a bomb.

They do other things. They hack. They learn how to hack. They can hack into computers. We had a very recent event in Union County where a student was hacking into his school computer. That's under investigation. We have cyberstalking. You no longer have to stalk a woman, for example, over the phone or through the mail or in person. Unfortunately, with many of these chat rooms, some of these individuals have decided to stalk women through the Internet.

We have, in short, a major epidemic on our hands in terms of law enforcement, and we have to deal with it. And one of the ways that law enforcement should and does deal with any problem involving law enforcement is through education. Because education can help prevent a young child from being exploited, a person who is not a young child from becoming a victim of identity theft or the like.

So, for three days at the Union County Police Academy, we offered a course involving the Internet and your child. It was offered in the first session-- And by the way, this is a hands-on course, so it requires that the participants have a computer. In the first session, it was offered to educators, who were assigned there by their superintendents. We wanted people at this session to have a working knowledge of the computer. And the express purpose of that was so that they could go back and spread the word to teachers and other educators to offer the course.

The second group were community-oriented police officers. We taught them so that they could go out in their community policing to meet with various civic groups, again to spread the word about Internet safety and children.

And the last session, which was a week ago Saturday, was offered to parents, and again, the people who would have the most contact. The frustration is and will be that this course, as effective as it might be, is severely limited, because we don't have the resources to teach all the parents, to teach all the law enforcement officers, to teach all the educators. And by the way, I hasten to add that when I saw all the parents it encompasses, of course, the law enforcement people and the educators-- In fact, when I spoke to them before each session, especially the parents, I said to them at the first session we had

educators, at the second session law enforcement, community-oriented police, and now parents. So they told the educators and the law enforcement people that they were really there as parents, as much as in their other role. And I'm now telling you as parents, you're here as educators in law enforcement in your role, because we need you.

In terms of the course itself, we've received favorable reviews. We are going to repeat it on April 7. But again, our biggest problem is getting the word out, because we cannot have 1000 or 2000 people being taught at the same time, again because it requires the use of the computer.

Present at that session and one of the -- two of the individuals, I should say, who were very instrumental in bringing it to our county are seated next to me. To my immediate right is Assistant Prosecutor Anne Frawley, who I mentioned is the Supervisor of the Special Prosecutions Unit. And to Assistant Prosecutor Frawley's immediate right is Lieutenant Patricia Leonard. And although they're not going to appreciate that I offer them this opportunity to speak, I would offer them the opportunity to add anything to my comments. And certainly all three of us would be willing to answer any questions that you have. Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

A N N E F R A W L E Y, E S Q .: Thanks, Tom.

Thank you very much.

One of the issues that I'd like to address, as Prosecutor Manahan indicated, what normally gets in the paper and makes the headlines is the sexual exploitation cases. And they are very disalarming. However, one of the things that we have seen an increased amount of is on-line harassment and threats in the schools. We are seeing it at every school in Union County, it

appears, based on our recent classes we taught -- have Web pages which were prepared with the best of intentions. That is, to inform the parents what is going on in the schools, to let the parents have a way to connect with the teachers. But unfortunately, for every good reason there is a Web site out there -- someone has a reason to make it a harmful--

What we're finding is students are going in harassing teachers on-line, threatening teachers on-line. They do this because they have a sense of anonymity. They feel they cannot be traced. They are not in a situation where it is something that can be detected within a day or two. We are also finding, and as the newspapers unfortunately are reporting, is the threats of students to other students. And this is happening at an alarming rate. And although the papers frequently talk about the exploitation, the sexual exploitation, the child pornography, and the Web sites that are there that the children are being exposed to, we also have to look at those choices that the children are making in terms of their teachers and the schools and the protection of the teachers and the educators.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

L I E U T E N A N T P A T R I C I A L E O N A R D: I don't have anything to say at this point. I think they've pretty much said it all. Do you have any questions?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Do you want to ask a question, George?

Assemblyman Geist.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: Thank you, Chairwoman.

Good afternoon, Prosecutor. It's a pleasure meeting you.

MR. MANAHAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: Do you know whether your prosecutorial colleagues have embraced your very innovative programs such that this experience can be shared by residents in the other 20 counties?

MR. MANAHAN: Assemblyman, I know that, subject to some financial restraints, that all 21 county prosecutors are very much aware of this problem and have taken steps within their respective counties to deal with it. And we've gone so far as -- subsequent actually to the last time I appeared before this committee, we have taken it up as a body to work very hard to deal with necessary laws that are -- to combat computer crime. We hope that legislators, such as yourself, will pick up our rallying cry at some point. We will need it, but I can't speak for every prosecutor's office, but I know that each prosecutor in his or her way is working to deal with this problem.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I'm sure that our Attorney General is aware of what you're doing to some degree or someone at the AG's Office.

MR. MANAHAN: I believe so. My office has always received support from the Attorney General.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: They're saying yes.

MR. MANAHAN: Yes. Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: They're saying yes.

MR. MANAHAN: From my blind side, I'm just--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think that's important to share that and to approximate the cost and the numbers you're reaching, so that we can be aware of it, as a legislative body, to promote that.

I'm waving to someone who started me on the Internet trail a number of years ago, Parry Aftab.

It's very important that we not only have the information within our own county, but that we move it on to other -- you know, pass it on kind of situation. It's very important to all of us, because the Internet is not only this state, other states, and Federal law should be looked at as well. I don't want to talk about law, but sharing of these programs or the benefits of these programs. I'm not so certain if the library, if you had any librarians there, because they're a major resource for us. And I think that might be another group that you might teach.

MR. MANAHAN: I am sure that we will not want for students, because it is a very important course. What we have tried to do is to do what law enforcement does many times. It's called train the trainer--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MR. MANAHAN: --so that we can increase the circle outward. I think that every computer should come with a videotape, because most parents are computerphobic -- they wouldn't know what to do with the computer -- but to go with a videotape that talks about the dangers of the Internet before it's even plugged in.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Well, here's a thought, Mr. Prosecutor. We can find some resources -- and Parry is one of those -- to put that together and then give it to the libraries around the State of New Jersey. I have a high regard for librarians -- just in case you don't know that.

MR. MANAHAN: My sister is the children's librarian at Montpelier, so I do, too.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And I think they are the best teachers, and they meet the most number of people daily in our state and at a different level, a more interactive level, because they come in willingly, and it's their own idea to come into the library. And I think that's a resource that you should access.

Scott, did you want to say something? (no response)

Nellie?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN POU: Madam Chair, I would just like to make a comment. And I know that this very important hearing is specifically geared towards the Internet, the use of it, and the sexual exploitation--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And safety.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN POU: --and safety of--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: In general.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN POU: --our young people. I was listening to the news early this morning as I was getting ready for my day, and unfortunately, there was a horrible report that indicated-- And it wasn't on the sexual exploitation, but you'll appreciate what I'm about to say, Mr. Prosecutor. It really dealt with children having access to Internet. Obviously, we're aware that many parents-- In your testimony, you've indicated how oftentimes they're doing it in the privacy of their own home, and many parents and family members are not even aware of what it is that they're doing or what they're on-line with and what have you.

But what some of the children are able now to do is purchase -- this is a little bit out of the air -- but purchase those popguns. And the popguns, while there are not the four or so safety measures that any manufacturer would have to go through in terms of some of your other

products that are permitted to purchase through the Internet, they are, however, incredibly dangerous. They have caused 300-- It was reported this morning it had caused 300,000 serious incidents and four deaths, just in -- with this particular piece of handgun, which looks-- All you have to do is take out that orange little attachment, and it looks like a real gun.

So I just bring it back to what we're talking about here. We're dealing with the safety issue. The safety issue goes well beyond many of the areas--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Sales.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN POU: --and very important issues that are -- you know, information that we're talking about today. But the sale of that to young people through the use of using their parent's credit card and the access that they have without requiring any kind of verification or other forms of identification becomes an issue. So I would like to just make that as a comment. Because as we deal with the prosecution of many of these horrible crimes that are happening, we need your advice and input on issues of these other types of safety measures as well.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Safety nets, as we have in other areas. Every day it's a new challenge and warrants a new solution -- another solution.

MR. MANAHAN: I would say, Assemblywoman, if I could, to conclude that -- of course, subject to any questions that you may have -- that you're absolutely right, Assemblywoman. Any possible crime that can be committed -- can be committed through the use of the computer. Any danger that can be posed to our children and ourselves can be effectuated through use of the computer. But I think when we're dealing with this issue of safety of

our children, government leaders, members of law enforcement, educators, can all participate and should participate together, but no one can take the place of the parents.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN POU: Absolutely.

MR. MANAHAN: And so parental monitoring is the single most important factor. And that's why I was saying about the videotape, because unless and until we get past a generation of parents who are somewhat computer ignorant or computerphobic, they will not be able to monitor what their children are doing. So I think that's -- education is an exceptional key. And by the way, as to the librarians, we have never had a problem in a library in Union County, except for overdue books we have once in a while. But because the libraries do monitor the use of the Internet, most if not all of them have an age limitation. You have to be a certain age to do it. And they do have people assigned to that area to make sure that it's not abused. So there is some monitoring going on at that level, and that's very important.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: One of the things that was raised the last time was that a computer be in a public part of the house, not in a room with a closed door.

Yes.

LIEUTENANT LEONARD: Madam Chairwoman, I do have something to say now, just to explain to your committee members, after hearing some of the questions and what you have questions about. This program that we have presented to parents at the Police Academy in Union County was developed by Lee Ann Shirley (phonetic spelling) out in Washington state. And we sent one of our detectives, Andre Banks, to her school for a week to learn how to present the whole program to parents. The

program is specifically geared to parents who are computer illiterates, much like myself, where you have a child, who's a 12-year-old, who you need to turn the computer on for you. When we get these parents into the computer lab, they are taught everything in this program to find out where these kids have been, on what sites, what they have done, and to look into the trash can that's in the computer to see where the children are and what sites they're going to.

And the other steps that we are taking in this area, also, is to offer it to other counties in the train the trainer program, where under Prosecutor Manahan's direction, we are bringing that program from Idaho to Union County, where we're going to offer it to anyone in this area, any police department, who want to have their detectives trained to train parents. Then they will be able to come to our police academy and, again, receive that proper training.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Tom, maybe when we do the Victims' Rights Summit, we might be able to ask Jim O'Brien and Richard Pompelio to set up a computer area where your people might be able to just give an overview to a lot of those coming. I think we had about 500, 600 people come last year. Not that you should set up the computers, but they should arrange for a section or a room to be set aside just as a program so that you can give them input, because a lot of police, a lot of juvenile officers come, a lot of prosecutors come. You might be able to, then again, gain new disciples to put that work forward.

MR. MANAHAN: Thank you. We certainly would be willing to follow up on that offer. We do have today--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: If you don't, we will. (laughter)

MR. MANAHAN: You'll follow us. You know where to get us.

We do have -- ask Lieutenant Leonard, she was kind enough to do it -- some of the hard copy materials that were given out during that course, which we will leave here for the committee for whatever purpose.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, very good. Thank you. Thank you.

Any other comments or questions? (no response)

Thank you very, very much.

MR. MANAHAN: Thank you.

MS. FRAWLEY: Thank you.

LIEUTENANT LEONARD: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Pat Tumulty, the Executive Director, the New Jersey Library Association.

PATRICIA A. TUMULTY: Good afternoon, how are you?

I'm Pat Tumulty.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MS. TUMULTY: I am the Executive Director of the New Jersey Library Association, and I am very pleased that you invited us to be here today to talk a little bit about Internet safety issues and public libraries. And as you noted, I did bring some guests with me.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MS. TUMULTY: I brought Robert White, who is the Executive Director of the Bergen County Library, Cooperative Library System. He works directly with about 70 libraries in Bergen County, many that work with Mrs. Heck's district. So they're very familiar with each other. And Barbara Teal (phonetic spelling), who is from the Westfield Public Library, who is the President of our Association this year.

So we wanted to come and just talk very briefly about the topic of Internet safety and assure you that the librarians of New Jersey have taken Internet safety issues very, very seriously. We have been involved in looking at Internet safety issues for almost four years since 1996, when the Internet has started to come onto the fore. I don't want to read all my testimony. You will have it there for your reference.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I appreciate that.

MS. TUMULTY: But I wanted you to look at certain things. The first part about our testimony, though, focuses very much on the question that many people say to us: Why can't you simply filter the Internet? Why can't the public library just filter everything that comes into it? And I've tried to provide you with some constitutional issues. There are very strict constitutional issues with regard to that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And I think Parry Aftab was also going to raise those.

MS. TUMULTY: I've tried to outline for the committee, for your future reference, the variety of court cases that have already been down and legal challenges that public libraries cannot do this, that it is a very serious issue. But to go down the road of having a law that mandates that every public library filter the Internet, the chances are that it will be declared unconstitutional -- are very great and very high. And we've listed the current court cases that have done that.

So we wanted to give you some legal context in which we're facing that situation and then the libraries are facing that situation. But that is not to say that the library community in New Jersey has not done a lot about Internet access. And all of your public libraries -- the board of trustees of a

public library in New Jersey has the legal authority to develop policies that govern that library. And that would include your Internet policy. And I'm pleased to say that virtually every public library board in this state has adopted what we call an Internet use policy, which determines how the Internet will be provided in that library. And it's determined on local conditions.

The local board, made up of citizens of that community, will look at their community and determine whether they're going to provide filters or they're going to have the children's room going to be filtered or whether there will be no filters at all in the public library. And that is because that is their responsibility, and we have found by doing that, that those libraries are very responsive to community needs. And we have listed some of the things. We have found, though, in looking at our libraries, most of them do not filter. Most of them have sat down, developed policies, looked at the issues in their own local community, and decided that Internet filtering is not for them.

One of the other things that we've also included in your packet is a discussion of, actually, a consumer report study that just came out here in March of 2000, which looked at maybe six home filters to filter the Internet, that's available for home use. And what that study found was somewhat troubling, and what our libraries find are somewhat troubling. About 20 percent of the time, a site will get through, even with these filters, that are considered questionable. And it will also then block sites such as one that we noted, the Southern Poverty Law Center, that did not have objectionable materials, but the site blocked it. So filters are not the answer. They're not always going to do what we want them to do.

And I think when we talk to the prosecutor also we share the great belief that education is the great key. Because we have a greater fear that our

libraries may say they have filters, and some parent may think, “Well, then my child has nothing to fear here. Everything will be absolutely fine,” when that could be an unreasonable expectation given the advances of the technologies that are actually out there. I mean, there are just millions of Web sites, and the technology is just not sophisticated enough to always assure that a site that you as a parent may want blocked for your child is blocked.

Just as a librarian could never assure that I may not pick out a piece of reading material for your child that you may not want, these are things that we can't assure. And utilizing that study, we have seen that the consumer reports survey did kind of confirm what we said -- that it's a very difficult thing, and that filters are not necessarily the complete answer.

Given that, the New Jersey Library Association has adopted a policy which I have put in your packets, which talks about Internet filtering. And what we have said, we affirm the right of all users to have unrestricted access to the Internet. We affirm the right of libraries to make filtering software available to those who deliberately choose to use it. But we acknowledge the right of parents to determine the level of Internet access for their minor children. And that is the principle that we feel very strongly about. That we want to work with the parents to help them understand what the Internet is all about. That the librarian will not take the place of the parent, and the librarian will not be the person to be making those choices for your child. We want to work with you to make sure that you understand what the Internet is all about and the safety issues involved.

We have found that many of our libraries -- and also have been actively involved in Internet safety issues. Some of our public libraries do have Internet safety training classes for parents. I've included some materials

from the Ocean County Library, which has a very extensive Web site, which includes materials on different Web sites which will teach parents how to use the Internet.

Another interesting model that they've done in Ocean County is, they actually worked with the Prosecutor's Office to develop two videos, which are five-minute videos which are done, really, with kids in the local community, and the kids kind of talk peer to peer about the dangers of the Internet -- and are utilized as training films. And these are distributed to all the libraries in the Ocean County library system. And they're very excellent videos--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Very good.

MS. TUMULTY: --and we would be happy to share them with you. We also have started to develop our own training materials for libraries. We've looked at a draft of a document called Web-Wise (phonetic spelling), which would work with parents of fourth- and fifth-grade students to help them with the Internet, to sit down and use it as a kind of interactive thing when they come in Saturday with their own children -- to sit down -- that we could work with them.

So we are also trying to find the training role that we find in libraries. And this is the kind of role that I-- I was thrilled to hear your comments, Assemblywoman, because this is our role. We believe that we are educators, and that our role in educating the public, being the place where many of the public will come for information about the Internet, is a very serious responsibility and one we do take very, very seriously and one that we hope to be working more with and your committee.

We also would like to stress that we believe in the role of school librarians in teaching kids how to utilize the Internet. The Internet is, as we've just talked about and from our perspective, obviously, there are dangers that we talk about -- the sexual exploitation -- the things that I can't minimize the dangers of it. But what we're finding right now is, many people can't even evaluate what is a good Web site, what is an accurate Web site, and what's a true Web site. And what I mean by that -- the information many people believe-- If it's on the Internet, it's true. We just copy it -- that's the world. And that is by no means true. It's almost frightening now the kinds of materials that are up on the Web site that aren't authorized or-- People can't even judge and a kid can't even judge by looking at that. We're finding kids who are just copying things from the Web site. "It was on the Internet. It's true, isn't it?" And that is a tremendous difficulty. If we don't start with good school librarians who are teaching kids, right now, media skills on how to evaluate Web sites, I think we're going to have a very serious educational problem in the future, because we need to be able to teach children how to use that as an effective tool.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And of course, I think it was just in yesterday's paper -- I don't know if you read about it -- that a, I guess, a second -- third-grade teacher turned on the computer with a -- in her classroom. And for the first few seconds, she heard the children make a sound, and apparently a custodian who was in the night before put a porno tape in and forgot to take it out. Yeah. These are safety net issues that we have to worry about. What kind of penalties will be placed on the misuse of computer systems, particularly in a situation like that? There has to be a penalty involved. People just can't come in and take a recreation break, that they

consider a recreation break, and misuse equipment that's owned by the school board.

MS. TUMULTY: Well, we understand that. Obviously, we also look at the -- situations in the libraries are different than the schools.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MS. TUMULTY: We have a different constitutional standard--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

MS. TUMULTY: --than the schools.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

MS. TUMULTY: And that is something that we knew--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: So that's why we're doing all of this.

MS. TUMULTY: Right.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I mean, every day we find a new problem to address, and we only know by interacting. And we learned that a few years ago, and now there's more out there, Parry. And Parry has been working on this for years.

Linda Greenstein -- stein.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GREENSTEIN: I answer to both.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You have to watch, because I called her Pou for a long time. She doesn't like that. (laughter)

MS. TUMULTY: So we would like to work with you, and helping that Internet safety is an issue that we're committed to, but it's an issue that we need to work with parents and our libraries to see that they understand their role in making those choices for their students.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely. And children know more about the computer than even the teachers do, because they find other ways of getting information. And if you ever have a problem with the computer, call a teenage relative, and they'll walk you right through it.

MS. TUMULTY: So I hope I've given the committee some of the background of what we're using in our public libraries, that you understand our role as -- our constitutional role in the public libraries, but how we're also trying to balance a lot of that with a lot of education and our willingness to work with you in terms of helping parents.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

Linda.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GREENSTEIN: I did want to ask a question.

MS. TUMULTY: Sure.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GREENSTEIN: Essentially, you're saying, then, that the libraries are taking the position in their policies of not doing any filtering. Essentially, the Internet will be there. The children would be able to get on it and pretty much have access to whatever they--

MS. TUMULTY: That policy will be made locally, by the local library board.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GREENSTEIN: And what-- Throughout the state, is there any variation in that, or are most local library boards making the same decisions on it?

MS. TUMULTY: There is variation. Most of them are not filtering at this time. I can honestly say most are not filtering, but we have some who are putting privacy screens on so that no one else can -- to look at

the material when someone is on the site. Some are filtering in their children's area only. Some are requiring parents to sign Internet permission slips. Some are purchasing-- Several are purchasing very expensive filtering software which will allow a parent to determine a level of access to the Internet, but that's extremely expensive. By that, it takes each personal library card and almost codes it to what level of access to the Internet you have, and that's an extremely expensive system. We've had demonstrations for our librarians on that system, because we want them to know what's out there in terms of tools. But that's a very expensive system, but we have seen some libraries purchase that. They are holding Internet safety classes. Some will let kids on chat rooms, and some won't. So we are finding the local decision-making -- a variation across the state.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Pat, do you know if school libraries have the filtering systems?

MS. TUMULTY: I would say because of their different constitutional standard, more school libraries are filtered--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MS. TUMULTY: --because, again, the standard of which they're held in terms of--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's different.

MS. TUMULTY: --content to classrooms and things like that. So I would think if you did ask NJEA, you would find more schools, obviously, are filtering, because of the difference -- the constitutional standard. Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Good. Thank you.

Scott Garrett.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARRETT: Just one point and comment. I commend you on your focus being that it should be a local decision-making, a local board of trustees, or what have you. I think that is the appropriate way. I've been listening to you, but also skimming your entire package--

MS. TUMULTY: Certainly. That's fine.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARRETT: --and see about in Camden how they opposed the Federal law, which is an intervention with private and local decision-making. And also, in that packet-- You didn't send us this. Maybe you did. The librarians' guide -- it's on the--

MS. TUMULTY: Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARRETT: And I think this goes to the Assemblywoman's comment about the little popgun, but also the computers as well. They highlight this. They say, "Remember, it's not the technology, but how it is used that makes the difference." So our focus should be -- not be imposing another mandate or a restriction from above on the technology itself, but it's on the parents and how it's being used. So I appreciate your testimony.

MS. TUMULTY: Absolutely. And that's why we wanted to show you the kinds of materials that the library community across the country and in New Jersey are utilizing to safety--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: But the way we put on over-the-counter drugs, "This is poison to a child," you'd have to do that somehow on the Internet.

MS. TUMULTY: Well, somehow you need to-- If there are filtered Web sites, you have to tell them that they could still see something that they don't want to see.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yeah, I know. I'm thinking in terms of just as a piece when you're entering a site, that there should be a little -- for adults only -- sign there.

MS. TUMULTY: Well, again, I think is -- the other Assemblyman said--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And for some adults, not all of them.

MS. TUMULTY: --that goes for the person on the other end. The library can't be the people making that, you know.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: No, I don't mean you. But I think there should be some little sign. Because remember, when we first started this years ago, you could be looking up an anatomy question for school and get a whole myriad of smut and horrible, crazy cult things, and I think you still can.

So the point is, I think that those kinds of sites should have a little mark, like a skull and crossbones. I'm serious. I think that somehow a visual warning should be there on that -- as you're entering. I don't mean a skull and crossbones particularly, but I really think we should kind of take care of that ourselves. I mean, it could be a kind of self-imposed noting that this is not a children's site.

MS. TUMULTY: There are ways that are starting to come out with different kinds of software -- search engines that start to rate sites in terms of what's probably the higher likelihood that the site that you're looking for has the information that you're-- I mean, there are some search engines that are starting to sort of rate sites--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, really.

MS. TUMULTY: --saying -- by rating them not necessarily what you're talking about, but rating based on the words you're coming up with, that this is probably a more highly likely source that you'll find the information that you're looking for. They've not quite gotten over the problem that, shall we say, Barbie comes up with a lot of sites that you don't want Barbie to come with. And I can't take that away, that sometimes poor kids typing in Barbie is difficult.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I told you my first venture into the sites, when Dr. Fenster was -- we had a hearing with Dr. Fenster. And I said, I know-- My daughter had said, "Well, you should try those chat rooms." And I went into a chat room, I was petrified. (laughter)

So the point is, I don't want to be exposed to that, even by accident. I have never gone into a chat room ever again, and that's years ago. I just won't do it, because I don't want to have those kinds of mistaken trips.

MS. TUMULTY: But you know you have the educational thing to know what you're going to go into now.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, I do now. I stay away from it entirely.

MS. TUMULTY: And that is the things that we need to teach people to do. You bring up, even though, a funny site that maybe many people know. Whitehouse.gov is the official site for the White House. I mean, many people unfortunately type in Whitehouse.com, which will not bring you up something that you would wish to see.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Really?

MS. TUMULTY: Oh, yes. And you didn't know that one? Oh, okay. And Whitehouse.org, though I have to say is actually to some extent-- I brought examples of that, because that actually is--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Is it in the package?

MS. TUMULTY: No. I have just that with me.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, okay.

MS. TUMULTY: It just is so funny. It was just--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You have to tell me again later, Pat.

MS. TUMULTY: No, Whitehouse.org brings up a copy of what they say is Mr. Bush's inaugural address.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: What they say?

MS. TUMULTY: What they say.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Ah.

MS. TUMULTY: And they present it as though it were.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yeah.

MS. TUMULTY: And if you read this, you would hope that he didn't say this in terms of-- And that is unfortunately what happens on many of the Web sites. You think--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yeah.

MS. TUMULTY: --that's an official Web site. You think that that is--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, of course.

MS. TUMULTY: --information, and it is not what would you want to be quoting anytime in any of your remarks. I'm sure.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Did you get that, Michael? Oh, good.

MS. TUMULTY: Don't get that one, so--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Go ahead, George.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: Thank you, Chair.

I always commend you, by the way, Patricia. You're just wonderful. Today's packet, for those in attendance, has this remarkable Librarians' Guide to Cyberspace that Assemblyman Garrett just referenced. And I'm glad to be on this new committee, but I'm very glad to be here today.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's not a new committee.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: Well, I'm glad -- this is a new membership for me, on your committee, for this alone. I mean, as a parent to Geist guys -- this is enlightening to me, cyberspace for parents and kids. It's almost as if I want to have this bulk quantity of this in my district office to help all of us parents--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: They're not giving you free copies, George.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: --deal with the realities of cyberspace for kids. Are these available in our public libraries throughout New Jersey?

MS. TUMULTY: Yes. We can get -- in some of them, they're also available on-line from ALA, and we can get you those sites. One of the things that we've done with some training materials, we worked with AT&T to put basic Internet training materials, sort of like to train the trainer, and I think we could easily work with you to put those kinds of safety sites on our Web site to do something like that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I think Parry has something to say about that, too. You know, if we all join together, you find that -- but everyone has his or her own method of doing things, and then when we

interact and talk to one another, we find out there's a little bit of a change on one and a little bit of a -- and you come up with the best possible solution that way. That's why I'm interested in the Union County piece as it pertains to this, and yours, and Parry's, and anyone else who is working in that regard.

Thank you, Pat.

MS. TUMULTY: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Parry.

P A R R Y A F T A B, ESQ.: Good afternoon.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: How are you?

MS. AFTAB: Thank you so much for inviting me.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You're very welcome.

MS. AFTAB: It's so rare that I get to speak in English in my own state (laughter), just having gotten back Singapore.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: She's always out of the country.

MS. AFTAB: Oh, please, yeah.

My name is Parry Aftab, and I was born and raised in New Jersey. I still live here. I now practice law in New York, because I couldn't earn a living donating most of my time to Internet safety as an Internet lawyer. I am the author of *The Parent's Guide to Protecting Your Children in Cyberspace*. The new book-- I don't know if you've seen the new book.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: No.

MS. AFTAB: This is your copy.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: See. I'm glad I said that.

MS. AFTAB: And if anybody wants a copy -- on the committee wants a copy, if you--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's not worth more than \$25 is it?

MS. AFTAB: No.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: All right. Because then I have to buy it from you.

MS. AFTAB: Twelve ninety five. I made sure that McGraw-Hill wasn't going to make any money on this book either. It's also in Spanish, although I'm--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh.

MS. AFTAB: --very unhappy. They changed the title. The English or the U.S. version is translated into Spanish, but they called it *Inocencia and Peligro*, which means innocence and danger, which-- So I'm fighting them, not allowing them to release it in the United States, but I might let them do that just so you can have it in Spanish as well. There's a UK version.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Did you see the census?

MS. AFTAB: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We need that.

MS. AFTAB: You'll have the whole thing. You can have English, Spanish, you can have the U.K. version, the Singapore version, the Japanese, whatever you want.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I mean, just to digress a little bit. Would you just give them a briefing on where you were--

MS. AFTAB: Who I am.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --in Asia making the changes--

MS. AFTAB: Well, last--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --about a year ago, was it?

MS. AFTAB: --week I was in Singapore.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Do you remember when you were changing the laws--

MS. AFTAB: Right--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --that just to stop--

MS. AFTAB: --in Japan.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, Japan. Please.

MS. AFTAB: In Japan, child-- Let me tell you who I am, and this might make a little more sense.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Okay.

MS. AFTAB: I'm an Internet lawyer. I was one of the very first Internet lawyers anywhere. And I was asked to do a piece for CNN in 1997, and they asked me to talk about Internet safety and the law. I said that's okay, because I protected corporations on the Internet. And they said, "By the way, talk about filtering software." And as Pat knows and anybody else, filtering software was very, very new in those days. I had no idea what I was talking about. So I went onto the Internet and fudged it. Worst interview I've ever done, but my hair looked great. (laughter) And it started a new noncareer for me, because people, even though I told them I didn't do kids, wouldn't allow me out of the kids Internet safety arena.

So I told my kid sister, who is kid doc for AOL-- I was the -- have a lawyer for AOL and Court TV, the law center legal help line, in providing answers to people who had legal questions. My mother didn't teach us to make money in our professions. Both of us were donating our time. She was the on-line pediatrician. So I asked her to find a book. There wasn't one. She said, "You have to write it." I said I'm not going to. She said, "I'm going to call Mom." I said, go ahead. Six months later, my first book came out. That

was *The Parent's Guide to the Internet*. The money from that book was donated to getting children in wheelchairs connected to the Internet. The money from this is donated to CyberAngels and Wired Kids. UNESCO has put me in charge of children in the Internet for North America. But the name of their program is Innocence and Danger.

And as you know, I don't like that name, because I think the Internet is the most incredible thing that has been given to us, to children, to adults, to everyone else, as long as we handle it properly. It's like putting a car -- saying a car is dangerous because people get into car accidents. Yet, it allows us to go to places and do things. And so we need to understand how to use the Internet effectively. So we changed it and called it Wired Kids. Wired Kids -- the American Library Association is a member of Wired Kids, AOL, Disney, Lycos, Yahoo!, Sesame Street, PBS, just about -- the FBI, the FTC, and actually our Chairwoman is a member of Wired Kids as well. She's one of the very few individuals in the world who was named to our advisory committee.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: She was a constituent. I never even knew it. Then she moved.

MS. AFTAB: Why, I'm in Edgewater. That's still pretty close.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, okay. Pretty close.

MS. AFTAB: Okay. So I've been spending a tremendous amount of my time keeping people safe in the Internet. I run CyberAngels. CyberAngels was formed by the Guardian Angels, you know, the guys with the red berets.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MS. AFTAB: So it was formed in 1995 by Curtis Sliwa and the Guardian Angels. I was a keynote speaker at a White House summit. I

bad-mouthed the Guardian Angels, saying the CyberAngels was an interesting concept, but I wasn't a fan of the vigilante group, the Guardian Angels. So I got home and there was a voice mail on my machine from Curtis Sliwa. You hear on the morning talk shows--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Right.

MS. AFTAB: --and you know what he sounds like, and he said, "Before you bad-mouth me at a White House summit, would you at least find out what we do?" And I said absolutely. I had no reason whatsoever to find out what he did. Eventually, I agreed to have dinner with him and brought a senior detective from the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office with me, who had a 12th degree black belt and two side arms. (laughter) So after the two guys manipulated trying to be the one with his back to the corner, I laughed through dinner. By the end of dinner, I volunteered my time to help them with the work they're doing with inner-city kids that nobody else would deal with.

So two months later, here I was donating 50 percent of my time to teaching parents about the Internet, working with the FBI and others on policy things. You got me stuck in that one, thank you very much. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You're welcome.

MS. AFTAB: Curtis called because he was having problems with the Guardian Angels running CyberAngels, and he said, "Would you run it?" And I said no. And he kept calling, and I told him I would run it for two weeks until he found somebody else to do that, and that was three years ago.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MS. AFTAB: We had no volunteers at the time, no Web site. The person who had been running it destroyed the Web site. I have 9000 volunteers in 74 countries around the world.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Wonderful.

MS. AFTAB: That's a new number for you. *Reader's Digest* wrote about us, and we have 600 law enforcement officers. We find missing children. We report and seek out 70 child pornography Web sites a day. We help between 500 and 600 cyberstalking victims a day. Cyberstalking victims are the ones who receive death threats, "I'm going to kill you," or somebody put somebody else's body with your head on it on the Internet--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Morphing.

MS. AFTAB: --or threats-- Right, the morphing. All kinds of terrible things. We do this all over the world. And in our work with child pornography, we learned that Japan did not have child pornography laws. And about 40 percent of the child pornography Web sites we found were located in Japan. So, together with legislators and advocacy groups in Japan, we lobbied for a child pornography law, which was put in place on November 1, 1999.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That was exciting.

MS. AFTAB: And I couldn't go to the White House to pick up our silver medal that was given to us by the White House for the work we do in CyberAngels, because I was in Japan lobbying for a law.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: But it helped us here, too.

MS. AFTAB: It did help us here. Absolutely, because you now cannot find child pornography in Japan. It's harder. It's in Russia, but that's

okay. I was married to a Russian at one point; I can do that, too. So this is what I do. I mean, I deal with the crimes.

In the book, *Parent's Guide to Protecting Your Children in Cyberspace*, we talk about ethics. We talk about the bad stuff kids are doing, and New Jersey is very, very good at this. Some of our kids--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Very good at doing bad stuff?

MS. AFTAB: --and bad things on the Internet. The earliest, a 10-year-old, who was arrested in connection with doing terrible things on the Internet, came from New Jersey. The Melissa virus person came from New Jersey. We're a very talented state. We have Lucent. We have AT&T, and we have all these really great things, and we also have people who break the rules.

We also have one of the best law enforcement agencies in the world when it comes to cyberlaw located here in New Jersey. The Cybercrime Task Force--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Remember when we had one police officer in the State Police Department?

MS. AFTAB: I know. I remember. Bob O'Leary.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: One.

MS. AFTAB: Oh, my--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yeah.

MS. AFTAB: I remember when you introduced us.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MS. AFTAB: I keep trying to get him out of the state to come work for me.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I know.

MS. AFTAB: The problem is, none of us get paid for doing what we're doing--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I know.

MS. AFTAB: --so it's not a good business model. But the Cybercrime Task Force here with the State Police is a group of prosecutors and law enforcement working together, and they've done incredible things. They are also members of Wired Kids. Let me tell you-- And I'll answer any questions you want to, and let me tell you what the lay of the land is and what I think you can do and what I think you can't do and where I'd like you to go.

I'm in Japan. I'm in England. I'm in France. I'm in Singapore. I'm in Hong Kong. Every government of the world asks me for my help on keeping people safe on the Internet. Do you know the one place I don't help keep people safe on the Internet? New Jersey. Now it's not that I charge too much, because I'm free when I do Internet safety. Yet, as a lawyer, they pay between \$450 an hour and \$600 an hour for my time. That means ask me in child safety mode, I'm a lot cheaper.

But frankly, with the exception of the woman who is sitting at the head of this table, whose heart has always been with people of the state, not just in her constituency, but a woman I truly admire, Rose Heck is an incredible woman, and I'm here for this. But I'm truly embarrassed that we are the state that has so many wonderful, talented resources -- Bell Labs, Lucent, Verizon, hello -- why aren't we leading the world much less the United States on these issues? When I look at child victims who have been abducted by Internet pedophiles, we have more on a per capita basis in the State of New Jersey than we do in any other state in this country.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Okay, that's it. You know what we have to do.

MS. AFTAB: The children are on-line here, and I am offering my help. Now, let me tell you what I suggest we do. Wired Kids is a nonprofit we formed so anybody who's got any program that's working can share it. I sat here for two people who were testifying before me. I heard the Prosecutor of Union County, who is working with Lee Ann Shirley, who is also on my advisory board, who does the train the trainer programs. She does the Internet and your child. We have been doing, in CyberAngels, train the trainers, we've been working with the State Police. We did the very first Cybercrime Training Program in Passaic County two years ago, where I got the head of security of AOL to fly up as a favor to me and somebody from Interpol to come and help teach, too.

People will do this. And it's important that as long as I live and was born, and my children live in this state and hopefully my grandchildren will live in this state, that we keep people safe and that we start shining the way we can. Now, why are kids--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: But then you're going to go out of state again, and we can't reach you, Parry.

MS. AFTAB: I doubt--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We'll have to get you on the Internet.

MS. AFTAB: --I'll go out in the world. That's the good thing. You can reach me on-line.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes. Yes.

MS. AFTAB: Parry@aftab.com. My first name and my last name, dot-com, or if you can't remember that, CyberAngels, no hyphen. It's got an S at the end, otherwise it's a porn site. Okay.

But it's very important you do several things. Let me tell you what's working. Parents do not come to classes. They don't come. I was part of MCI's Smart Surfing Conferences, where we took six of the top experts, fun experts, those of us who do television and things all the time, and we went around to six different cities in the United States, paid for by MCI, and invited parents for a free lunch, bused them in, gave them my first book, and Jean Armour Polly's book, which is the *Yellow Pages of Good Sites*, for free. Six people would show up. So we thought that this was unusual. It's not unusual. That's the way it works.

You can't do educational programs for parents and expect them to come. They will not come. They are too busy. This is either too hard or something they don't consider important enough. If they use the Internet, parents think it's not as bad as we say it is, because what do they do on the Internet. What do you do on the Internet? You don't go to chats. What do kids do? They chat. You don't surf around in--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I only talk to family.

MS. AFTAB: Right. But children use the Internet differently from their parents. When parents use the Internet for work, they use E-mail. They go to certain Web sites. They may buy on-line, but they don't surf endlessly and aimlessly. They don't use instant messaging the way the children do, and they don't chat. That's where the dangers are. It's not the stuff our kids see on the Internet that's the problem, it's the strangers they talk to.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

MS. AFTAB: Even the worst things they can see on-line are safer than the pedophile they're going to meet off-line. Now, last year, the FBI had about 1500 new cases that they opened up with -- the Internet predators who were trying to lure children to off-line meetings. We're looking at about 4000 cases state and local, a lot of cases across the country. They have about 27 million children under the age of 18 in the United States on the Internet. Is that a large number of kids being lured? No. But every single one of those cases is absolutely preventable, because in every single one of those cases, the kids have gone willingly to meet a stranger. They might have thought he was a cute 14-year-old boy, not a 47-year-old pedophile, but they knew they were meeting a stranger.

Now, we did a survey with *Seventeen* magazine and two professors in South Florida. Again, I'm going to professors in Florida to do a study. Something's wrong here. Sorry. Ten thousand-eight hundred teenage girls, 13 percent of them indicated that they met strangers off-line. *Family PC* just did their own survey -- 24 percent of the teen girls, between the ages of 13 and 17 that they polled, said that they were meeting strangers off-line. Sixteen percent of the boys said that they were meeting strangers off-line. I have done that same survey at private schools and public schools here in the State of New Jersey. We've done about 8000 returned surveys, school by school. If they want me to come and speak at the school, they have to do the written survey for me from all of the kids so I can find out what they're doing when I talk to them.

I just recently did it at the Roosevelt School in Lyndhurst, New Jersey. Is that near--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Close.

MS. AFTAB: Close. We got a problem with that. It's going to be the first Wired Kids school in New Jersey, so we got to find another right actually where you are.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, absolutely.

MS. AFTAB: But what we learned is kids are meeting strangers off-line. So while we have to teach parents about the dangers of the Internet, to do so, unfortunately, follows a dialogue that parents tend to be deaf to. We have been talking about too much sex and violence in the media since long before I was born. And I remember my mother saying, "Too much sex and violence in the media. Parry, go watch television." (laughter) And then I said too much sex and violence in the media, kids, go watch television. You say it, but you recognize as real people in real lives, well, okay, you know, I survived Sylvester Stallone, my kids will survive the next thing. We talk about it, but we recognize that we come out relatively okay with too much sex and violence in the media, and we're not going to do too much about it anyway, and there's not a whole bunch of other interesting things we can talk about, so what the heck.

And because of that, parents tune out to what we're talking about. We need to explain to them that the Internet is not the television. It's the telephone. None of us would allow our children to talk to a stranger, for two hours on the telephone, who called our house. We may let them watch a Clint Eastwood movie. We'd never let them talk to strangers.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: But also, let's not just say strangers. They can be on the Internet and be a friend that you know, a friend of a friend, and they use a different name on the Internet.

MS. AFTAB: Well, that's a separate issue. That's kids hurting other kids.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: No, I'm talking about people coming in contact -- adults.

MS. AFTAB: Right. And they'll do that. There are a whole bunch of different ways kids get into trouble -- knowingly, thinking that they're too smart for the rules. The kids know the rules. We have a program here in New Jersey-- All of us start here. I live here. So it's much easier for me to do it in New Jersey. We have a program called the Teen Angels. The Teen Angels are a group of teens. They're actually out of Holy Angels High School in Demarest. Is that near--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: No.

MS. AFTAB: Oh.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I'm going to give you the list.

MS. AFTAB: Okay, good.

Holy Angels High School. I went there and spoke to them for a television special I was doing for ABC, and there was a problem with the PowerPoint presentation. It was filtered by the school, so we were unwired when they were shooting all of this. And the kids asked me the best questions. When I talk to parents, I talk to about 1000 parents a month. I talk to about 4000 kids a month. And when I talk to parents, what you have to do is say, this is the Internet. This is how it works. This is how it's abused. Here are the solutions. By then, they're sound asleep or home.

With kids, they know how it's abused. They know the dangers. They just want to know the tricks, and they want to know how to get to what they want to do without having to deal with all the stuff they don't want. And

frankly, they don't want the porn. They're annoyed by it. Thirteen-year-old boys with raging hormones might be the exception, but the rest of the kids aren't. They'll go to gory sites. Celebritymorgue.com is one of their favorite sites. And if you talk to the librarians, the gory sites--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: The vampire things.

MS. AFTAB: --are where they go. Yeah. But the kids want to figure out how to use this safely.

So let me tell you what we're doing, and then I'll shut up. Teen Angels -- teens between the ages of 13 and 17, who are trained by FBI and are in New Jersey -- the New Jersey State Police. They are trained by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. They are trained by the ACLU. They are trained by the CEO of Net Nanny. They are trained by everybody and anybody you can imagine. Once they know everything there is to know -- they've talked to kid victims, they've talked to everybody that they think they need to understand -- once they know all of that, they go out, and they're my experts. That's the train the trainers. I train them when they're teenagers, they're cheaper that way. And they have testified before the National Research Council in Washington. They have been to the White House. They have been on the floor of Capitol Hill. They have been everywhere doing this. Again, they haven't done it here.

For the first time, we actually had sent them out to Parsippany to do one of the schools, somebody who wanted me. Now I have the kids go out and do it instead of me. These are terrific kids. They've been in *Seventeen* magazine. They're in *Seventeen* magazine this month. They're terrific. But why aren't we doing more of this in the State of New Jersey. I will set up Teen Angel programs wherever you want, all I need is an adult. I can train in

Internet safety. We can do it on-line through CyberAngels to sort of head over that chapter. These kids get into any college they want to get into. This is great for the kids, and it's great for the schools, and it's good for the parents.

We also have a program called Wired Kids, the kid program. Wired Kids will be starting a new contest. And the contest is celebrate the Internet. They have to talk about why the Internet is cool and how to do it safely.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: How old are the kids?

MS. AFTAB: Between the ages of 7 and 12.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN POU: The Wired Kids?

MS. AFTAB: The Wired Kids. And they will-- I'm going to get local sponsors. I'm going to get AOL and Yahoo! to sponsor it, like it or not. We're going to get everybody to do this, where the kids are going to come up with anything they want to that they think will teach kids how to use the Internet safely. They want to do a video. Cool, do it. You want to design a Web site? You want to do cartoons? You want to do a computer game? You want to write a song, do pictures, posters, skits. Whatever you want to do, we'll have a contest. And we do it county by county. We do it state by state, country by country. We can start here.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, sure.

MS. AFTAB: And it's a great way-- All the Internet companies and everybody that's trying to do business on the Internet will love it, because it's celebrating the Internet, but it teaches the kids how to think on their own, and that's very important. We are also coming up with a new group--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And as the other gentleman said, we have to teach them to swim.

MS. AFTAB: I know. Well, I know.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's true.

MS. AFTAB: I know. It's unbelievable.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It is unbelievable.

MS. AFTAB: But part of that is ethical surfing. Part of that is teaching them not to send out death threats to each other--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MS. AFTAB: --or say nasty things to each other or threaten the life of the President of the United States. Another thing that we started here in New Jersey, when one of the kids stole a password of somebody else, and threatened the life of the President of the United States, and then had the men in black -- the real ones -- show up to arrest the kid whose password was stolen. You're very innovative in New Jersey.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I know. Even more so than I ever imagined.

MS. AFTAB: Hey, I was from New Jersey. If you ever talked to my teachers--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I know, look at you.

MS. AFTAB: --they are librarians, you'd know.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I know. I know.

MS. AFTAB: We've got *The Sopranos* here. I thought we'd get them to endorse Internet safety. So that'll be one of our next things.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We can, you know. Talk to me afterwards.

MS. AFTAB: Yes, I would like to. Actually, I wanted to do that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Sure.

MS. AFTAB: And Britney Spears has indicated that she will help. Cool. Perfect. So we will do whatever -- whatever we can do, let's do. There are cartoons. There are comics. There's all kinds of things. Disney took up our challenge, and they designed Surf Swell Island, a Disney Web site where Mickey and Minnie and Goofy and Donald teach Internet safety and privacy to kids.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Well, that's great.

MS. AFTAB: It's terrific.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: You see, I like the children's approach myself.

MS. AFTAB: That's the way you do it.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: I do.

MS. AFTAB: And you do it in schools. There should be mandatory Internet safety education and ethics at the same time we teach them how to use a computer.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We should put Judge Judy's new book on-line--

MS. AFTAB: We should. Well, she endorsed mine.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --on the Internet.

MS. AFTAB: She's on the cover of my book.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's really fun.

MS. AFTAB: She's really fun, yeah.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yeah.

MS. AFTAB: She'll do this.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yeah.

Linda.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GREENSTEIN: Hi. What are some of the specifics that you teach on Internet safety, say, for the younger kids and then the teenage kids? Besides the-- I guess it goes beyond courtesy kinds of things, like not putting threats on. What are some of the other kinds of things that you teach?

MS. AFTAB: Privacy is first. And I'm a privacy and security lawyer, so it comes in a little easier. What we do is, we talk to the kids first. When we do a presentation, we say, if your friend was going to use the Internet for the very first time and had never used it before, what three tips would you give them? And they'll say, don't give out your real name on the Internet. You know, don't go to sites your parents don't say you can go to. Under the age of 10, they still say that. That's why, if you put the right seal on the sites-- I'll talk to you about ratings in a moment.

Put a skull and crossbones, you know that's where everyone's going, the best way to guarantee a popular Web site. And the last is don't meet strangers off-line or those kind of things. And you can buy real guns on the Internet. Kids do it all the time. Popguns are the easier thing they're selling these days.

And then when you start talking to them, you'll say well, okay, what information can you give to somebody on the Internet who is a stranger? And these kids go from, you know who they are and they're no longer a stranger a half hour after you've started chatting or two weeks after you've started chatting. When you say is it okay to give them your first name? Yes. What about your age? Okay. What about your school? No. What about if you play softball for your school? Okay. What state do you live in? That's all right. What position do you play in softball? Who's the toughest team you

play on your schedule? When did you play them or when are you playing them? I just found that kid on the ground. And none of those things seen alone would be personally identifiable. If I know the age and I know that they played Holy Angels two weeks ago, I can find that kid. And once you start talking to them about that, they're really good at it. They all think that the exception applies to them, however. They know all the rules, and they'll say, "But I know their story. I can tell." And they'll also -- won't tell you that they lie about who they are on-line, but somehow nobody else does.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GREENSTEIN: I guess the key, and I think this is what you said, is to think of the Internet as nothing but another way -- another window on the world. It's the same kind of thing you would teach a kid about being out there in the world. Who do you talk to, what information do you give. This is just a window--

MS. AFTAB: With a twist.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GREENSTEIN: The twist is that they think there's a protection.

MS. AFTAB: Yeah. The twist is, I can go up to kids on a playground and say, hi, I'm 10, play with me. And they're like, out of here lady. On-line, they don't know. So the things that we've taught our children about, is this someone you know or not, the visual cues--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GREENSTEIN: Right.

MS. AFTAB: --is this an adult or a child, they don't have that on-line. So what they'll say is they'll say, "Oh, no, that's okay. I checked out their profile, and it says they're 10." I mean, they actually do research. And Martinlutherking.org is a hate site. So what are these children going to believe. And that's why librarians are key, teaching them media literacy, teaching them

Internet literacy, matching content and information. The librarians and the library media specialists are the ones who run the world. Most of the schools are using filtering of one type in the State of New Jersey.

When I spoke at the American Library Association's annual meeting as their freedom of information speaker, I was surprised to see, out of the five librarians they had on my panel, four were filtering in the kids' areas at least. And the ACLU has agreed to not take on libraries that are filtering only in the kids' area. So I'm seeing that that's happening more and more. But as we know, filtering just doesn't work. It will block some of the sex sites.

In Singapore -- this is Singapore -- there was just an article in *The Straits Times* a couple days ago about what we had just done in Singapore. And they said using a filter is like putting a stopper in a tub with the water running. It was a great line.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: George.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: You've referenced your terms about our great Garden State. I just want to assure you we just approved new legislation in New Jersey to require parental consent for schools' utilization of the Internet presenting the children.

MS. AFTAB: You know what, you didn't need it. The Federal law that allows Federal funding to schools already applies. It's provided that for a long time, and Barbara Buono didn't talk to me about it, because it wasn't necessary. A school -- a photo can't be put up at a school Web site by the school without parental consent already, under Federal laws.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: If you could share with this Committee your insights on the initiatives already sponsored, such that we do it the right way, that would--

MS. AFTAB: I would be thrilled to.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: Through the Chair, if we could ask OLS to provide her with those bills. With her expertise, it would be probably enlightening to all of us.

MS. AFTAB: I would be happy to -- and help you make a law that might be constitutional.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: I was the co-prime of the Buono-Geist bill that you just referenced. And I, as a State legislator, did not know that there was Federal law that already provided protections.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Well, Parry lives with this day in and day out.

MS. AFTAB: See, this is what I do. And if I did it for a living, I wouldn't know as much as I do. This is my passion.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: Great. Great.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Excuse me, are you living on the streets yet, or what are you doing?

MS. AFTAB: No, but I got to tell you. I sold my house in Ridgewood, and the money went to support these things. That's why I had to close my law firm and get a job. So the firm gets half of my available time, and the rest I donate to these issues.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: That's good.

MS. AFTAB: We'll get funding. I mean, there's got to be grants in the State.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: See, Linda is an attorney. Linda's with the AG's Office, too.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GREENSTEIN: I know your name. The only thing that I can think of is I may have seen you on TV. Because when they said your name, I know you or of you, and I can't think of from where.

MS. AFTAB: I do a lot of television--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: She's all over the place.

MS. AFTAB: --and a lot of media and a lot of writing.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GREENSTEIN: That's probably where I've seen her.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: When we held our first hearing on Policy and Regulatory Oversight, before we put our first bill through, this was the only person in the audience to come help us -- was Parry Aftab.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GREENSTEIN: You're making it seem very exciting.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It is very exciting.

MS. AFTAB: It is exciting. Now I've got 9000 volunteers. They're regular people. We're finding criminals. We just found the top hacker in the world -- we just turned over to the Interpol and the FBI because they couldn't find him. These are regular volunteers. Nobody's paid a dime.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's an expertise that's quite useful.

MS. AFTAB: And if you met my kids-- If you met these kids who've devoted their time to helping protect others-- And one of the kids works in a soup kitchen, and she says, "You know, we talk about protecting kids on the Internet. Hello, I want to feed these other ones. But why don't we get used computers and put them into soup kitchens and homeless places." These are caring children who have taken their time to be the experts.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Well, a lot of our schools now and the new libraries that they're putting in the schools and the new expanded libraries, through our library bill, will have more and more computers. So we need more and more information.

MS. AFTAB: Well, NEC has given us--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And we will make sure that in Bergen County-- Stay for a few minutes so we can talk to Bob White, you and I, okay.

MS. AFTAB: Good. And NEC has given us \$35,000.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's not that I'm excluding them. They can come into the other counties after we perfect it.

MS. AFTAB: Absolutely. They can come. They can copy. It will just say copied from Bergen County first.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes. Yes.

MS. AFTAB: And NEC has given us money to do an Internet safety video. So we're doing one for parents. We're doing one for law enforcement. We have a new group called Cyberlawenforcement.com, which trains law enforcement officers on-line for free all over the world on cybercrimes, and they work together. And the video will be available for free on-line, and anybody who wants to sponsor it to print them out--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yeah.

MS. AFTAB: --can put their name on it. Slap their name on it with us. They can localize it. And we're doing one for kids. We're doing one for teens. We're doing one for law enforcement and one for parents.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Very important.

Parry Aftab is passionate, as you can see, about the work that she's doing. And she has been doing it for, you know--

MS. AFTAB: A long time. I've been doing this since 1992.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: If you look at the history of life, it's not a long time, but this is a long time--

MS. AFTAB: Pre-Web.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: --in this area.

MS. AFTAB: I also have the children's working group for the Internet society, which is the worldwide group. Ratings -- ratings are available.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MS. AFTAB: I praise the new group that's trying to do it -- rate sites. And what we're doing with Wired Kids is, we've got about 30,000 sites that are great for kids. And that's where the librarians are so helpful. I mean, the ALA has their 700 best sites. There are all these other groups. If we start putting together our favorite sites and letting parents nominate them and kids nominate them at a site here in New Jersey, do it. They can just put it in. We now will have 100,000, 200,000 great sites for kids. So when you want to send your kids out to look somewhere, you send them into the safe site list. Yahoooligans! wants to work with us on this. There are safe search engines. Lycos is trying to work-- Everybody wants to help. So if we're ready to move forward--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: So we should take advantage of that.

MS. AFTAB: --let's do it.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely. And I'm sure that this committee, this Advisory Council, has always been active.

Right, Scott?

ASSEMBLYMAN GARRETT: Absolutely.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: In so many areas.

MS. AFTAB: And you're the best looking advisory council in the Legislature.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And let me tell you that-- Let me also tell you about Scott. We don't always agree on everything. We come from kind of two different areas, but Scott is very dedicated to good things. When we did the domestic violence hearing up in Sussex, he had 102 fever and came to that hearing and stayed. I thought he was going to die, this guy. He was so sick. But we had one of the most productive meetings, right, Scott? We came up with a lot of good information that changed laws on domestic violence. We have been going all around the state. This is a major area of need. You know, we've started this much, and now it's like huge. And we have to make changes.

MS. AFTAB: And domestic violence.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, absolutely, another piece.

MS. AFTAB: Cyberstalking, we get about 300 cases of domestic violence--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And child abuse right there.

MS. AFTAB: --yeah -- by the cyberstalking on-line, where people are getting divorces--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: And we talked about the last time, you weren't here.

MS. AFTAB: --horrible, terrible things. We need a cyberstalking statute in the State of New Jersey.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We talked about all these people on beaches -- and we're coming up to the summer again -- taking photographs of children all day long. And our prosecutors have told us, this is the sign of either a pedophile or one who's on the way. All day long taking pictures of children and how serious it is. And that was the first time I heard the word morphing, remember -- morphing.

MS. AFTAB: Well, *Newsweek* this week--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Putting those faces in areas that are very questionable and over the Internet.

MS. AFTAB: And *Newsweek* this week has their cover articles -- pedophiles on the Internet. We've been working with them on that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes. It's very important that we protect our children from the Internet and we teach them how to protect themselves.

MS. AFTAB: Absolutely.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Because-- Yes.

MS. AFTAB: If we can start with the kids, they'll be safe. By the time we teach the parents, it's okay, because these kids will be parents by then.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes. We have to start with the children.

MS. AFTAB: We've got the resources.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

MS. AFTAB: We'll keep kids all over the world safe, but let's start at home.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, I think so.

MS. AFTAB: Okay.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: New Jersey, where we've been on notice now, and we'll take heed.

MS. AFTAB: Terrific. Here is my book.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Any other questions for Parry?

MS. AFTAB: This is yours.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

MS. AFTAB: Rose, if anybody wants one, please, just send me an E-mail or call my office. I know your legislative aides have my number.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yes.

MS. AFTAB: And I'll be happy to send one out. I don't make money off the book. All of the proceeds are donated to the nonprofits.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: But you have to tell us how we can help, too, Parry, as George said before. You know, we're all interested. We all take the road less traveled by anybody else, if it comes from this Council.

MS. AFTAB: Let's find a school. Maybe we could hold a conference of teens.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We can do that.

MS. AFTAB: And I'd love to do that down here in Trenton--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

Michael--

MS. AFTAB: --kid leaders all over the state.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We can get the student government presidents of the colleges and universities. And Michael is one-- He can help us.

MS. AFTAB: And the universities -- The College of New Jersey. My daughter is at The College of New Jersey.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh. Look at that.

MS. AFTAB: They have a huge problem with hate and cyberstalking.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: But we can do that with them as sponsors.

MS. AFTAB: Let's do that -- them sponsoring it. Let's bring in the kids in the high schools--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: All right. It's done.

MS. AFTAB: --and the middle schools and let the kids come up with the solutions and teach you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We will do that.

MS. AFTAB: Kids understand the Internet.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Parry, very easily done. We'll do it.

MS. AFTAB: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: We'll do it. Thank you.

MS. AFTAB: I'm thrilled.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you. (applause)

Thank you, Parry, very much for taking the time. I really appreciate it.

Do we have Curtis here? Someone from the School Board?

CURTIS S. MACYSYN: Hello.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Are you Curtis?

MR. MACYSYN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh, very good.

MR. MACYSYN: Good afternoon.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Good afternoon.

MR. MACYSYN: Curt Macysyn, Director of Governmental Relations for the School Boards Association. And many of the comments that I was going to mention, obviously, were touched upon, but there were a few remarks that I just want to highlight.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Please.

MR. MACYSYN: In terms of Internet usage, it's not going to go away anytime soon, and it's provided a whole world of learning for our students. And so I think the key is the dialogue that has to be created amongst parents, students, and their educators, and that includes the school boards.

In terms of what we promote, it's an acceptable use policy that the boards adopt for use in the district. And it would outline-- We've got draft policy -- it would outline a number of provisions of what acceptable use of the computer system would be. The policy itself is given to the student to sign and understand. And there was discussion earlier about stealing identities. And that there's an understanding for the student that this is a responsibility that they have to hold the access to their own identity close to the vest -- that that's something that they can't use and give out without understanding there might be consequences. In this case, you heard of a specific example that there was a consequence.

However, that student's ID was gained by another or accessed by another. There certainly were some dire consequences involved with that. So an understanding that there's a responsibility on behalf of the student for their identity and use of that computer system. And then also, that the acceptable use policy would be distributed to parents so that they are now understanding

of what is acceptable use, and hopefully can have a discussion with the student about their own parameters in terms of acceptable use of the system.

I think the other component of that is that if the policies are obviously violated, that there be consequences involved, whether that be suspension, expulsion, or some other sanction against the student that knowingly violates the--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Being determined by that particular school board.

MR. MACYSYN: By the school district. We think that--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: The district?

MR. MACYSYN: Yeah. The school board, because-- You know, I continue to mention more dialogue, because this is something that I just can't come-- You know, no matter how much we monitor this activity, you're not going to be there 24-7 to understand what people are -- what sites they're surfing. So there has to be a continual dialogue involved here with, you know, coming from the top down. Not only the school board, but the chief school administrator has to be involved.

And, in fact, in our acceptable use policy, we say that the superintendent should determine what are appropriate sites and also what things should be on -- if the district has their own Web site, what things should be on that Web site also. Then it also goes down to the individual building, where the principal or his or her designee has to provide oversight in terms of computer usage in that building, because some districts may be-- Some school districts may be one building. Some may be ten buildings. So just to say that the superintendent can keep track of this in a lot of cases is not going to be

acceptable. There has to be individual building oversight provided, too. And that's something that we also specify to the school districts.

In terms of the free speech, it's -- there is more filtering that goes on in the school districts. However, it's not the silver bullet, because, you know, once a technology is out there that filters -- can filter 100 percent, you know that, because there's maybe a profit motive involved that sooner or later somebody will come up--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Breakthrough.

MR. MACYSYN: --with a system to break through that filtering process. So you can't rely on the filtering. You know, even as good at it might be, it's not going to stand the test of time, especially when it comes to Internet usage.

And I think the final thing is that the school districts interface with the law enforcement agencies and have an understanding of -- so that law enforcement has an understanding of what things are going on in the district and vice versa. I think that's very important that that dialogue continues to take place also. I think it's a twofold issue: one, what's going on internally, and then what's going on externally.

And I'll give you an example of externally. I was surfing the net myself one time, and a pornographic thing popped up on my screen. So I went to our RT person, and I said how does that happen? And someone mentioned it's like a telephone. And it's not really, because when you're on a telephone with someone else, no one else knows you're on the telephone talking to them--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: It's a party line.

MR. MACYSYN: Right. But when you're on the Internet, people can find out what sites you're surfing. In this case, what our RT person said

was, “probably because you go to ESPN.com or maybe some other sport site, this pop-up screen was delivered to you.” And so it’s even broader than just a telephone conversation, although that’s a better analogy than watching television. But activities are monitored by people, and you just don’t know it. And what we’re dealing with in a lot of cases here are children, and children are not going to always use the best judgment, as much as we would like to think that they’re not adults. And so we have to be--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Even adults don’t use the best judgment.

MR. MACYSYN: Many adults don’t use good judgment either, but I think the expectation is that children are going to model the good behavior, hopefully, but they also model the not good behavior.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yeah.

MR. MACYSYN: So it’s a constant idea of providing as much oversight as you can by continuing that dialogue at the local level.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Good.

That’s what you agreed to before, right, Scott?

ASSEMBLYMAN GARRETT: What’s that?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Local.

ASSEMBLYMAN GARRETT: Point one.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Anyone else? (no response)

I’m glad that the School Boards Association is actively looking at this and involved with it. And we’ll probably appreciate your help when we’re looking for teens to participate.

MR. MACYSYN: Certainly, or a site--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Because you know, we find that unless we get total cooperation from the School Boards Association, the superintendents, the teachers and the kids don't come to anything. And that's something that was hard for me to learn, because I thought they would, you know, automatically allow them to participate in certain things. But I think the school boards and the superintendents have to make certain that there is participation. It is part of education in the world we live in.

MR. MACYSYN: Right. And that goes to my earlier comments. This is the Internet, and the use of the Internet--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

MR. MACYSYN: --is something that is not going to go away anytime soon.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Yeah. And it does a lot of good as well. I mean, we communicate -- all of us, the legislators with our constituents -- through the Internet.

Go ahead.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: Madam Chair, could you provide a status report on the bills pertinent to the Internet use that pertain to our schools? I just heard the expert reference that there's Federal legislation protecting our children, and bills have been introduced relative to the Internet phenomenon of protecting our children. Perhaps the School Boards Association can provide--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: The legislative body.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: --through the Chair -- could provide to our Chair some input on bills that are the right thing to do. It's a two-way street.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Are of interest.

MR. MACYSYN: Certainly, be happy to. And also what I'll do is -- I will provide the Council copies of the acceptable use policy that we promote--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Oh good, we'd appreciate that.

MR. MACYSYN: --within the school districts--

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you very much.

MR. MACYSYN: --just so you see what points we try to make in that dialogue.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Absolutely.

Thank you.

MR. MACYSYN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN GEIST: Thank you, Curt.

MR. MACYSYN: Thanks.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN HECK: Thank you.

I know Charlesetta could not come, so the UMDNJ could not be represented. UMDNJ could not come today, but they will send us written information, and we'll put that in our package to all of the members.

Would anyone else like to address the body? (no response)

No. All right.

I thank all of you very, very much. And we'll follow what we're doing. We'll be making some reports available, and you'll be able to access the transcripts of this particular hearing.

Thank you again, all of you who came today. I appreciate it.

Oh, Loretta Weinberg could not be with us today, and she has written testimony. So, if anybody wants a copy, please let us know. We will make sure this is part of the transcript.

(MEETING CONCLUDED)