

News from U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC)
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Ranking Member, Committee on the Budget
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.
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Spratt Introduces Bill to Stop Child Pornography

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC) today joined in introducing a bill to protect children from sexual exploitation – the “Child Obscenity and Pornography Prevention Act.”

“Child pornography is a sickness that harms not just the children in the pictures, but those who view them,” said Spratt. “The creators of this filth should be tracked down and prosecuted.”

Last year, the Supreme Court ruled that virtual child pornography – computer images of children engaged in sexual acts – was not prosecutable because the victims were not real children. The bill Spratt introduced would address this decision by clarifying that child pornography laws apply to images of children that are “virtually indistinguishable” from real children, “in that the depiction is such that an ordinary person viewing it would conclude the depiction is of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct.”

The bill would also strengthen penalties for creation or distribution of child pornography and create new offenses for pandering child pornography or providing children with obscene or pornographic material.

Spratt said that Congress intended the creation of virtual child pornography to be an offense punishable by law. “The Supreme Court was wrong to rule otherwise, and I am hopeful this bill will help to bring child pornographers to justice.”

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