

# U.S. Rep. Sensenbrenner: Supports bill to curb internet sex trafficking

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**Contact:** [Christopher Krepich](#)  
[202-225-5101](tel:202-225-5101)

Washington, D.C.—During today's House Judiciary Committee mark up, Crime Subcommittee Chairman Jim Sensenbrenner (WI-05) offered his support for H.R.1865, *the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017*. Sensenbrenner is a cosponsor of the bill.

His remarks as reflected in the record can be found [here](#):

*"The Internet has been one of the greatest innovations in history. It has brought tremendous economic and social benefits to humankind. We can now accomplish nearly any transactions with just a few clicks of a mouse from the comfort of our own homes. It is undeniable, that, for all of us, it has made life easier.*

*Unfortunately, the Internet has also made life easier for criminals, who can use the anonymity of the Web to mask their illicit activities and avoid detection by law enforcement. This is especially true in the realm of sex trafficking - one of the most horrific, insidious crimes you could imagine. Thanks to a group of committed, passionate professionals and brave victims, the problem of sex trafficking on the Internet is now receiving the attention it merits.*

*We are all now well aware of the reprehensible and blatantly criminal conduct of the executives at Backpage.com. Because young victims have come forward to share their stories, we are aware of the harm caused by these types of websites, which are not only a venue for sex traffickers to sell young women, but also materially contribute to this illicit conduct.*

*Backpage.com's conduct also shed light on websites that are using the Communications Decency Act to shield themselves from liability for their illegal activities, which is something Congress never intended.*

*For these reasons, I am pleased to be an cosponsor of H.R. 1865, the Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act, also known as FOSTA. As amended, this legislation will provide law enforcement additional tools to combat websites like Backpage. The bill creates a new federal statute criminalizing the use or operation of an interstate facility with the intent to promote or facilitate prostitution or sex trafficking.*

*The bill specifically amends Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act to make sure that state and local prosecutors can enforce any state law if the conduct underlying the charge constitutes a violation of the new crime. In addition, the bill amends Section 230 to make clear that state and local prosecutors can enforce state sex trafficking laws insofar as those charges would also constitute a violation of federal sex trafficking law. Finally, FOSTA will provide new mechanisms for financially compensating victims. Receiving compensation can serve as an acknowledgement of victimhood and help victims on their road to recovery.*

*I commend Ms. Wagner and Committee staff for their thoughtful approach to this issue. This legislation is the culmination of months of hard work and shows that we can take measures to prevent online sex trafficking without undermining the foundations of internet freedom. I urge my colleagues to support it."*

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