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1850 M Street, NW Twelfth Floor Washington, DC 20036 Phone: (202) 326-6000 http://www.naag.org/ March 6, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan Speaker of the House H-232 The Capitol Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte Chairman, Judiciary Comm. 2309 Rayburn House Office Bldg. Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable Nancy Pelosi Minority Leader 233 Cannon House Office Bldg. Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Nadler Ranking Member, Judiciary Comm. 2109 Rayburn House Office Bldg. Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Chair Goodlatte, and Ranking Member Nadler:

In 2014, forty-four state attorneys general wrote to express support for the Amy and Vicky Child Pornography Victim Restitution Improvement Act. Although the Senate passed the bill in 2015, the bill did not pass the House of Representatives in the 114th Congress. We write now to respectfully request that you pass the bipartisan Amy, Vicky, and Andy Child Pornography Victim Assistance Act of 2017 (S. 2152).

This bipartisan bill was introduced by Senators Orrin Hatch, Dianne Feinstein, and Pat Toomey. The bill combines components of bills formerly introduced as the Amy and Vicky Child Pornography Victim Restitution Improvement Act and the Justice for Child Victims Act. It establishes guidelines for restitution and seeks to ensure that victims receive timely and meaningful restitution. On January 23, 2018, the bill passed the Senate by unanimous consent and is now before the House Judiciary Committee for consideration. The need for this legislation stems from the U.S. Supreme Court's 2014 decision in *Paroline v. United States*, which held that although victims of child pornography are entitled to restitution, each defendant is statutorily liable only for the proximate injury his possession of the images caused. This decision was contrary to an amicus brief submitted by thirty-five state attorneys general urging the Court to allow full restitution to victims of child pornography.

Unfortunately, the Supreme Court's decision puts an enormous burden on victims of child pornography. In order to receive restitution, a victim must pursue every case in which a defendant was found to possess images of the victim. As the Supreme Court recognized, digital images of each child victim are trafficked worldwide, and there may be thousands of defendants found to possess each victim's images. As a result, victims are only able to receive a small amount of restitution from each defendant and must pursue thousands of cases in order to receive full restitution. Preventing victims from collecting

full restitution protects defendants, who are shielded from having to pay meaningful costs to those they have harmed.

The surge in child pornography on the Internet has led to increased victimization and trafficking to meet the demand for new pictures and live video of sexual violence against increasingly younger children. The highest "value" images traded online are those which depict the youngest victims and the most horrific sex acts. Additionally, the FBI reports there are now more investigations of child exploitation with a connection to the Internet than ever before. In December 2013, the FBI had more than 7,000 pending investigations involving child exploitation, including child pornography and sex trafficking.

While nothing can undo the harm done to these victims by perpetrators who produce, share and view these images, Congress can act to make it easier for victims to receive meaningful restitution. The Amy, Vicky, and Andy Child Pornography Victim Assistance Act will improve the law by:

- Clarifying congressional intent that victims be fully compensated for all the harms resulting from every perpetrator who contributed to their trauma;
- Establishing a more meaningful definition of "full amount of a victim's losses;"
- Clarifying restitution owed to victims;
- Establishing a process for victims to receive compensation from the Child Pornography Victims Reserve within the federal Crime Victims Fund and requiring judicial appointment of a guardian ad litem for victims of child pornography production;
- Allowing victims and their attorneys access to images in which they are depicted which is crucial for victim identification, expert testimony, forensic review, treatment, and the prevention and prosecution of future crimes; and
- Requiring the U.S. Department of Justice to report on implementation within two years.

As long as the scourge of child pornography persists, it is imperative that necessary changes are made to improve the assistance that victims can receive when defendants are held accountable.

We respectfully urge the swift passage of Amy, Vicky, and Andy Child Pornography Victim Assistance Act of 2017 by the Judiciary Committee and the House of Representatives.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sean Reyes Utah Attorney General

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Steve Marshall Alabama Attorney General

Robert W. Ferguson Washington Attorney General

Jahna Lindemuth Alaska Attorney General

Elesalo V. Ale American Samoa Attorney General

Leslie Rutledge Arkansas Attorney General

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Cynthia H. Coffman Colorado Attorney General

Matthew P. Denn Delaware Attorney General

Pamela Jo Bondi Florida Attorney General

E. Barren

Elizabeth Barrett-Anderson Guam Attorney General

Lawrence Wasden Idaho Attorney General

Tuhn

Curtis T. Hill Jr. Indiana Attorney General

S. G. et

Derek Schmidt Kansas Attorney General

MarkB

Mark Brnovich Arizona Attorney General

Xavier Becerra

California Attorney General

George Jepsen Connecticut Attorney General

Karl A. Racine District of Columbia Attorney General

Anna

Christopher M. Carr Georgia Attorney General

Russellh. Su

Russell A. Suzuki Hawaii Acting Attorney General

Lisa Madigan Illinois Attorney General

Tom Miller Iowa Attorney General

Andy Beshear Kentucky Attorney General

Jeff Landry

Louisiana Attorney General

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Brian Frosh Maryland Attorney General

Bill Schuette Michigan Attorney General

Jim Hood Mississippi Attorney General



Montana Attorney General

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Adam Por Laxalt Nevada Attorney General



Gurbir S. Grewal New Jersey Attorney General

Eric T. Schneiderman New York Attorney General

Wayne Stenehjem

North Dakota Attorney General

Junt of mills

Janet Mills Maine Attorney General

Maura Healey Massachusetts Attorney General

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Lori Swanson Minnesota Attorney General

THE O. Kaly

Josh Hawley Missouri Attorney General

Douglas Peterson Nebraska Attorney General

Gordon MacDonald New Hampshire Attorney General

Hector Balderas New Mexico Attorney General

Josh Stein North Carolina Attorney General

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Mike DeWine Ohio Attorney General

Mike Hunter Oklahoma Attorney General

Josh Shapiro

Pennsylvania Attorney General

Tetu t. Nilman

Peter F. Kilmartin Rhode Island Attorney General

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Marty J. Jačkley South Dakota Attorney General

Ken Paxton Texas Attorney General

lande Earl Warken

Claude Earl Walker Virgin Islands Attorney General

PATRICK Momsey

Patrick Morrisey West Virginia Attorney General

Peter K. Michael Wyoming Attorney General

- Eller 7. Rose

Ellen F. Rosenblum Oregon Attorney General

Wanda Vázquez Garced Puerto Rico Attorney General

an Wilson

Alan Wilson South Carolina Attorney General

Herbert H. Slatery III Tennessee Attorney General

T.J. Donovan Vermont Attorney General

Marr. Herry

Mark R. Herring Virginia Attorney General

Brad Schimel Wisconsin Attorney General