



Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

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The Rt Hon The Lord Foster of Bath
Justice and Home Affairs Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Dear Don,

Next steps on government's plans to prevent children from taking, sharing or viewing nude images online.

In December of last year, the government published its Action Plan to tackle [Violence Against Women and Girls](#), setting out a clear ambition that the UK would become the first country in the world where it would be impossible for children to take, share or view nudity online.

In June, the government challenged industry, on a three-month timeline, to work with us and set out roadmaps for how they would strengthen device level protections for children, with a view to preventing children from taking, sharing or viewing nude images on phones and tablets.

Today marks the conclusion of the government's engagement period with industry. I am writing to update the Committee on the progress that has been made and the next steps the government will be taking to protect children online.

Since June, the government has overseen an unprecedented work programme with Apple and Google, working with senior leaders and engineers to explore new ways of preventing child sexual abuse and strengthening protections for children online. Following this engagement, Apple and Google have provided the government with significant commitments. Both companies are developing meaningful changes at the operating level to make it harder for children to share nude imagery.

These proposals are a step in the right direction. However, the truth is they do not meet the scale of the government's ambition.

Children continue to face unacceptable levels of sexual harm online. They are groomed, coerced and manipulated into creating and sharing intimate images across online services. Those images can then be used for blackmail, sexual extortion and abuse.

This is why today the government is committing to introducing primary legislation to require major tech platforms to build in device-level protections for children. This will be introduced to

parliament as soon as we can, recognising the urgency of this issue whilst ensuring we get it right. We want to see movement on this quickly.

If platforms in scope of this draft legislation develop and implement technical solutions while our work is ongoing, we will of course reassess whether legislation is necessary.

We know that this is a sector that can - when required - innovate at an extraordinary pace.

Alongside these measures at operating system level, the government will bring forward legislation, if needed, to ensure the apps children use are also taking the steps needed to prevent children from accessing or sharing nudity. This will ensure whole ecosystem changes, tackling the means by which children are most often abused and groomed in the online world.

These measures, taken alongside our recent commitment to ban social services from offering their products to under 16s, will make Britain a world leader in online safety. We will give technology companies the chance to lead but not allow them to fail.

I wanted to ensure that the Committee was informed of these developments and I look forward to continuing to engage with the Committee on this important issue.

Yours sincerely,



Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport