

LibraryCrunch

Service for the Next Generation Library: A Library 2.0 Perspective by Michael Casey

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Status of DOPA

DOPA (Deleting Online Predators Act) <http://teentechweek.wikispaces.com/DOPA>

DOPA passed by a vote of 410 to 15 in a July 26th vote in the House of Representatives. A version of the bill did not come before the Senate for a vote in September. The website to follow the hearing is the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. On September 19, there was a hearing through this committee on "Online Child Pornography" that appeared to be related to DOPA, but not directly referenced in testimonies. If it becomes law, schools and libraries that receive E-Rate funds to help pay for Internet access will be required to block access to "social networking sites." These sites are defined by DOPA as those that enable communication among users and that allow users to post information or create personal profiles. Among the sites that could be affected by this law are everything from Amazon.com to the federal government's own First Gov web site.

*Oct. 11th: What is the status of DOPA? The Senate and House are not in session and won't be until after the election. When they return to DC, they will be focusing on leadership elections and appropriations bills. According to the ALA Washington Office, the Senate has no plans to consider any social networking bills during the rest of this session. **That means DOPA, in its current form, will die at the end of this session and not become law.***

What might the future hold? It's possible that in the next session, which begins in Jan. 2007, that the issue of social networking technologies might come to the forefront again. The House very well might try to pass a similar bill at that time.

What are next steps? Librarians should continue educating their Congresspersons, local decision makers and library users about social networking technologies. Since Congress will be home for the holidays, you may want to invite your legislator to the library for an event that centers around computer use and/or social networking technologies. Other tips and ideas for educating legislators and others about this issue are in YALSA's Social Networking Toolkit, which is available below.

For a more comprehensive web site on DOPA and additional resources, visit <http://wikis.ala.org/iwa/>

Posted by Michael on October 12, 2006 10:29 AM | [Permalink](#)

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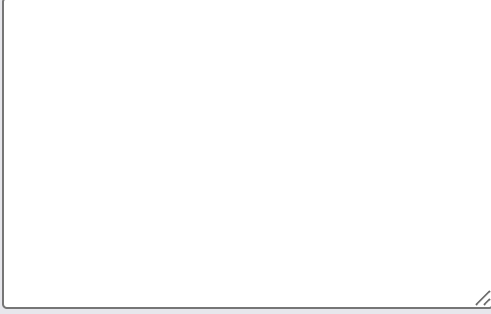
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