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May 26, 2020

Colorado General Assembly
Senate Judiciary Committee
By Email

Re: Written Testimony for the Record in SUPPORT of HB 20-1120

Dear Distinguished Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

During the current pandemic, the floodgates have opened online for the sexual abuse of children. **We have reached a crisis point.** In April 2020, 4.1 million reports of online child sexual abuse were reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children; in April 2019, that number was 1 million. Even before the pandemic, tech companies reported over 45 million photos and videos uploaded in 2018, double the amount uploaded in 2017.

HB 20-1120 is critical to combatting this epidemic of the sexual abuse of children. Technology has changed immensely since the last time we updated our legislation. Our statutes do not adequately cover the streaming of children being abuse in real-time or the streaming of past abuse. In the age of Netflix, we need to be able to apprehend and prosecute people streaming child porn.

HB 20-1120 not only adds statutory language accounting for these new technologies, but adds additional penalties for those who produce and trade in child pornography depicting children child under 12, physical force being applied to a child, or a child being raped or tortured – a necessary update for Colorado, which has some of the lightest sentences for online abuse of children in the country.

The exponential increase in this type of abuse of children is part of the public health crisis that we currently face, and it deserves your attention. HB20-1120 is a step forward in the correct response. We urge you to support it.

Sincerely,

Amanda Gall
Sexual Assault Resource Prosecutor
Colorado District Attorneys' Council