

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, esteemed members of the Committee. My name is Tiffany Kreck, I am the mother of two from Ellsworth Maine and I am asking you today to vote ought to pass for LD 1333.

I have seen some chatter about this bill, and it seems to me that the districts doing the best at content moderation have taken this bill as a personal attack. However, there is a vast swath of Maine often overlooked and not taken into consideration. Districts that do not have the resources, the funding, or simply haven't prioritized this in the same manner that other districts have.

I have a 15-year-old son that is incredibly tech savvy. He built his first PC three years ago. He was developing video games that he and his friends would play two years ago. A kid like my son, is probably always going to find a way to bypass a filter if they really want to. However, imagine my surprise as a mother when I found out that the device issued to him by the school had no filter on it, so even though I have the devices used here at home heavily monitored and restricted, I had been letting him use his school laptop freely not realizing that it had no filter.

After looking more into this matter and talking with my son and several of his friends, I discovered that the school had filters on their internet but bypassing that wasn't even a challenge. In fact, some claimed that their teachers had given them the codes to do so.

Kids are always going to find ways to circumvent the rules. It is in their nature. However, in some of our schools it isn't even a challenge. When I looked this up, I realized that this was something Maine had fallen behind on, with States like California and Colorado having taken these steps years ago. LD1333 would simply bring Maine up to date, and if the Republicans and Democrats were willing to work together, they could help facilitate the resources that would be needed to bring these other districts that have fallen behind up to date.

With some Districts setting the example, and others not seeming to even count it as a priority, this is one of those things that becomes the responsibility of the State to set the minimally required standards for all Schools. Because as each year passes, our world becomes increasingly dependent on technology, devices, and digital innovations. I ask you to vote ought to pass on LD 1333, and work together to create a much needed State Standard, because no device sent home with a child should be without a filter.