Congress Working on Kids' Online Safety Legislation with AI Implications

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The House Energy and Commerce Committee advanced a broad package of children's online safety bills, including the Kids Internet and Digital Safety (KIDS) Act (H.R. 7757) and Children and Teens' Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA 2.0- H.R. 6291), which now heads to the House floor. While the debate largely centered on privacy and platform accountability, several provisions touch directly on artificial intelligence—including mandatory disclosure when AI chatbots interact with minors and new studies on how social media algorithms impact mental health.

The House package, driven by Republicans, drew criticism from Democrats who argued it weakens key protections found in bipartisan Senate counterparts of these bills. Notably, the House bill omits "duty of care" language that would require tech and AI-enabled platforms to design products with children's safety in mind.

Meanwhile, the Senate unanimously passed its COPPA 2.0 (S. 836), which expands data protections to teens under 17 and restricts how companies—including those deploying AI-driven personalization and advertising tools—can use minors' data.

Overall, both chambers are moving toward tighter regulation of platforms and AI technologies that interact with young users, though the House and Senate currently diverge on how strong those protections should be.