

The Kids Safety on Set (Kids SOS) Act

Endorsed by: BizParents, Hire Survivors Hollywood, and SAG-AFTRA

Child actors and performers should be safe on set. But currently, there are insufficient safeguards to protect children who work in the entertainment industry. The investigative documentary *Quiet on the Set: The Dark Side of Kids TV* highlighted how damaging these gaps were for kids under showrunner Dan Schneider during the 1990s and 2000s. Additionally, the recent case of Timothy Busfield, who was charged for inappropriately touching two child actors while he worked as a director and executive producer on the Fox drama “The Cleaning Lady,” which aired from 2022-2025, only reinforces that these weaknesses continue today.

As the entertainment industry has failed to successfully self-police and promote safe work environments for child actors and performers, it’s important that enforceable protections are put in place to keep these kids safe. With the entertainment industry no longer localized to Hollywood, these unsafe environments can be found in any state. As such, the Kids Safety on Set Act seeks to provide a minimum federal standard to protect kids across all states. It would require production companies to protect child performers from documented child predators and offenders by performing background checks prior to hiring crew, cast, and support personnel that come into frequent contact with young talent. These basic protections for child actors are similar to how schools protect students by hiring personnel that can pass a criminal background check.

Specifically, the bill mandates that any individual who has supervisory duties, compulsory authority, or frequent and private interaction with a minor successfully pass a criminal background check. The background check must be completed within 90 days before the individual begins work or receives an ownership interest and must include a Live Scan fingerprint clearance or an equivalent criminal records screening that screens for any criminal offenses against minors. This legislation covers entertainment entities and production involved in creating, producing, or distributing works intended for an audience, such as theater, film, music, television, and monetized online content.

To ensure industry compliance, the bill grants the Attorney General the power to seek civil monetary penalties, which can be as high as twice the total production cost of the activities involving the unauthorized employee. Additionally, the Attorney General is required to seek a temporary restraining order to immediately halt any production activity involving the individual in violation until they are either terminated or brought into compliance. For individuals with ownership stakes, the bill mandates that their equity interest be reduced to 2% or less and their physical access to production sets be permanently revoked if they fail to meet these basic safety standards.

For more information and to cosponsor this bill, please reach out to Julia Kravitz with Rep. Beyer’s office at julia.kravitz@mail.house.gov.