



March 9, 2016

**BY E-MAIL**

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
U.S. Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20150

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
U.S. Senate  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thom Tillis  
U.S. Senate  
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20150

Dear Senator Schumer, Senator Grassley, and Senator Tillis:

On behalf of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) and the families and children we serve, I am writing to express our support for your legislation, the *Kevin and Avonte's Law of 2016* (S. 2614). This bill provides law enforcement with additional tools in their search for missing children.

As you know, NCMEC was created as a private, non-profit organization in 1984 and designated by Congress to serve as the national clearinghouse on issues related to missing and exploited children. NCMEC provides services to families, private industry, law enforcement, victims, and the general public to assist in the prevention of child abductions, the recovery of missing children, and the provision of services to combat child sexual exploitation.

S. 2614 reauthorizes existing programs designed to assist in locating individuals with Alzheimer's and dementia and adds new support for individuals with developmental disabilities, such as autism. Its allowance for the use of federal funding to train and educate law enforcement, first responders, families, school personnel, and other individuals on how to proactively prevent individuals with these conditions from wandering and to develop training and emergency protocols to better equip those responding to these types of cases will have a significant impact on cases of missing children with developmental disabilities. Additionally, S. 2614 provides law enforcement, first responders, school personnel, and others with the critical tools necessary to identify children who are at risk of wandering, prevent them from doing so, and to adequately respond in cases where these children do, in fact, go missing.

NCMEC also supports the provision which amends NCMEC's authorization to provide technical assistance and training to law enforcement, families, and others in the prevention, investigation, prosecution, and treatment of cases involving missing and exploited children, including cases involving children with developmental disabilities such as autism.

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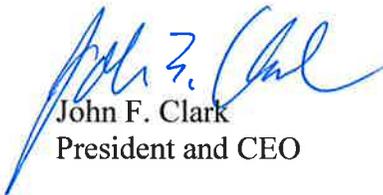
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The Honorable Charles Schumer  
The Honorable Charles Grassley  
The Honorable Thom Tillis  
March 9, 2016  
Page 2

NCMEC has long recognized the need for specialized training for law enforcement, families, and others on how to respond when children with special needs go missing. As part of those efforts, we worked with the autism community to create a law enforcement guide on how to handle cases where children with special needs go missing. As such, we believe the legislation you have sponsored—Kevin and Avonte’s Law of 2016—could enhance law enforcement’s ability to locate these critically missing children.

NCMEC is proud to lend our support to this important legislation, and we are grateful for your dedication to the safety of our nation’s children.

Sincerely,



John F. Clark  
President and CEO