

Rob Portman

United States Senator for OHIO

Bipartisan Portman Bill Would Allow Federal & State Law Enforcement to Hold Accountable Websites That Knowingly Facilitate Online Sex Trafficking

COLUMBUS, OH – Today, U.S. Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) convened a screening of [*I Am Jane Doe*](#), a film available on Netflix that chronicles the stories of several victims of online sex trafficking on Backpage.com. Portman, who serves as co-chair of the Senate Caucus to End Human Trafficking, brought together leaders from across Central Ohio, who are on the front lines working to end human trafficking, to view this documentary.

“This screening is an important way to help spread awareness of sex trafficking, which is increasingly occurring over the Internet, and to unify Central Ohio against these heinous crimes,” Senator Portman said. “Backpage.com knowingly facilitated criminal sex trafficking of vulnerable women and children and covered up evidence of these crimes in order to increase its own profits. It is time to fix the law that has allowed Backpage to escape the legal consequences of its illicit actions. My narrowly-crafted bill will hold accountable companies that knowingly facilitate online sex trafficking and ensure that victims can get the justice they deserve.”

NOTE: In his capacity as the chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (PSI) Portman, along with Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO), led an 18-month long bipartisan investigation into Backpage’s involvement in online sex trafficking conducted through its website. The [widely-praised](#) investigation produced a stunning [report](#) detailing how Backpage knowingly facilitated criminal sex trafficking of vulnerable women and children. This PSI investigation is featured in the documentary.

As a result of the investigation, Senators Portman and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) [introduced](#) bipartisan legislation — the *Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act* — to ensure justice for victims of sex trafficking and ensure that websites such as Backpage.com, which knowingly facilitate sex trafficking, can be held liable and brought to justice. The bipartisan measure is gaining momentum and garnering strong support. In addition to the [state attorneys general](#) and [advocates in Ohio](#), there is a growing chorus of national anti-trafficking advocates [supporting](#) this bipartisan bill.

As founder and co-chair of the Senate Caucus to End Human Trafficking, Senator Portman has a [long record](#) of fighting this terrible crime. He has [authored five federal anti-trafficking laws](#) signed by President Obama, each

designed to make a real difference in better serving victims and helping law enforcement to combat this horrific crime.

Following are photos of today's event:





###

Permalink: <https://www.portman.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2017/8/in-columbus-portman-convenes-screening-of-i-am-jane-doe-highlights-stop-enabling-sex-traffickers-act>



- [Home](#)
- [Constituent Services](#)
- [Issues & Legislation](#)
- [Newsroom](#)
- [About Ohio](#)

[About Rob](#)

[Contact](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[RSS](#)