

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

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Opening Statement Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings

H.R. 680, the Eliminating Pornography from Agencies Act

March 8, 2017

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Government Operations Subcommittee Chairman Meadows has reintroduced a bill from the last two Congresses, the Eliminating Pornography from Agencies Act that would prohibit employees from accessing pornographic websites on federal agency computers.

Mr. Meadows introduced this bill to address instances of federal employees viewing pornography on their work computers. I wholeheartedly agree with Mr. Meadows that this is unacceptable conduct for federal employees.

The legislation before us today would require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to issue guidelines that prohibit federal employees from accessing pornographic websites while at work.

I appreciate Congressman Meadows' work on this legislation, but I do want to point out that this conduct is already prohibited. The Standards of Ethical Conduct, which apply to federal employees, states: "Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities." Viewing pornography is already a prohibited activity that subjects federal employees to agency discipline under current law and regulations.

I will not oppose Mr. Meadows' legislation, but I believe that every federal employee should already be well aware that the underlying conduct is already prohibited.

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