

Dating app maker Match Group backs US bill seen as privacy threat

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Match Group, whose line of dating apps includes Tinder, Match.com, OkCupid and Hinge, a measure that the tech sector has largely held weakens online privacy

Match Group, the parent company of dating apps such as Tinder, on Tuesday publicly endorsed a US bill others in the tech industry fear will

erode online privacy and speech in the name of fighting child abuse.

US senators unveiled the bipartisan measure last week, aiming to curb images of child sex abuse by forcing tech platforms to cooperate with law enforcement on [encryption](#) or risk losing the legal immunity for what is posted on their websites.

Digital rights activists have joined the tech sector in arguing this move is an indirect way to weaken online encryption in the name of better law enforcement access.

They say it erodes two cornerstones of the online ecosystem: strong encryption to keep data secure, and a liability shield which enables [social media platforms](#) to allow users to post content freely.

"We don't casually lend our support to this legislation," Match Group chief executive Shar Dubey said in an online post.

"We must balance concerns around privacy with concerns around safety—which sometimes can be in conflict."

Match Group has a line of dating apps including Tinder, Match.com, OkCupid and Hinge.

"We as tech leaders should engage with lawmakers in thoughtful dialogue and work on establishing guidelines and practices to make the online world a safer place for our kids," Dubey said.

"We support this legislation and the beginning of this very important conversation."

A hearing is set for Wednesday on the measure, which is backed by victims' rights organizations.

Lawmakers say the bill—Eliminating Abusive and Rampant Neglect of Interactive Technologies Act (EARN IT)—allows companies to "earn" their liability protection, by gaining certification of compliance from a commission of government, industry, legal and victim group representatives.

Encryption has been a point of contention between tech firms and [law enforcement](#) for decades.

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