



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 10, 2009

Mr. Craig Newmark, Founder  
Mr. James Buckmaster, Chief Executive Officer  
Craigslist  
1381 9th Ave.  
San Francisco, CA 94122-2308

Dear Mr. Newmark and Mr. Buckmaster:

As Members of Congress involved with the recent passage of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Act, we are deeply disturbed by the number of violent crimes that have resulted from the “Erotic Services” section of Craigslist. According to *The Washington Post*, “[i]n the Washington area, according to police, at least 50 women have been raped or severely beaten in the past two years by men who responded to ads they posted on Craigslist.”<sup>1</sup> Just over half of rape victims do not report the crime<sup>2</sup>. This statistic, coupled with the number of cities your company serves, leads us to believe that the number of crimes that may result from your site could be staggering.

While we were pleased to note the recent agreement reached between your company and various State Attorneys General to discontinue the “Erotic Services” section, we have a series of questions that we hope will demonstrate your commitment to ending the violence which has resulted from it. It is imperative that creating an “Adult Services” section to replace the aforementioned section must not simply shift the same solicitations to a newly entitled section, but instead must lead to fundamental change.

- Please provide a copy of the standards for the “Adult Section.” What process was used to develop these standards? Who are the individuals who developed these standards, and what are their professional backgrounds? What, if any, formal affiliation do they have with Craigslist?
- How many personnel will be hired to screen the “Adult Section” listings and to monitor the would-be advertisers?

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<sup>1</sup> Aaron C. Davis, *Online Sex Connections Linked to False Sense of Security*, THE WASHINGTON POST May 21, 2009 at B1

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.rainn.org/get-information/legal-information/reporting-rape>

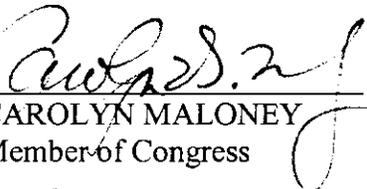
- What means do you intend to employ to ensure that those who seek listings in the new “Adult Section” are not victims of unlawful trafficking, and that the “users” of their “services” are not unlawful, paying customer johns or violent abusers?
- What level of cooperation do you intend to establish with police agencies to ensure the enforcement of criminal laws and the facilitation of criminal investigations?
- What training will your staff receive to ensure that they can properly apply your promulgated standards?
- What supervision and auditing will take place to ensure proper application of the standards?
- What accountability will there be for employees – and for Craigslist – if listings for illegal activity are posted?

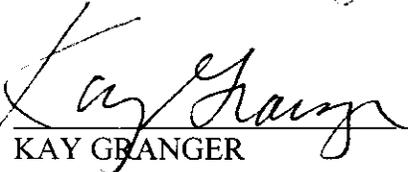
The evidence suggests that Craigslist’s “Erotic Services” section abetted unlawful commercial sex trafficking. It seems clear that anyone viewing the listings would recognize the purpose and illegality of them and the euphemisms such as “roses per hour” and “donations” in place of payment fees.

Collectively, we have a long-documented history of action on issues related to sex-trafficking which is why we are particularly concerned by events that have resulted from use of your site. We hope that in the coming weeks you will ensure that your stated reforms meet their intended goals to end the abetting of prostitution and human trafficking.

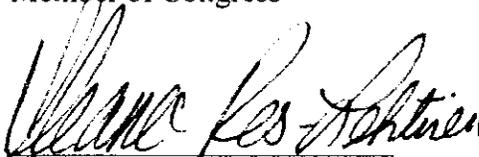
We ask for a written response to the questions posed in this letter and request a meeting to go over these issues. Should you have any questions, please contact Orly Isaacson with Representative Maloney at 202.225.7944.

Sincerely,

  
CAROLYN MALONEY  
Member of Congress

  
KAY GRANGER  
Member of Congress

  
CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH  
Member of Congress

  
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN  
Member of Congress



DAN BURTON  
Member of Congress



FRANK WOLF  
Member of Congress



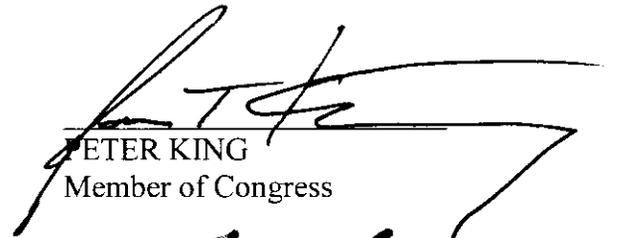
MICHAEL BURGESS  
Member of Congress



JO ANN EMERSON  
Member of Congress



CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS  
Member of Congress



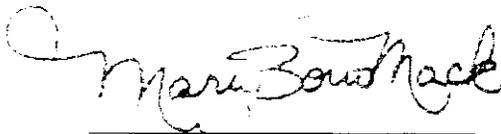
PETER KING  
Member of Congress



ANH JOSEPH CAO  
Member of Congress



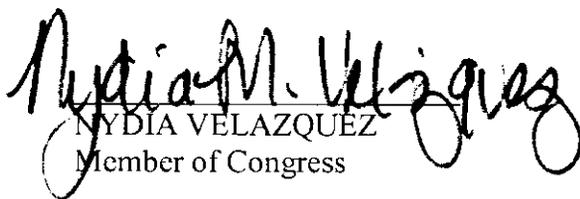
JEFF FORTENBERRY  
Member of Congress



MARY BONO MACK  
Member of Congress



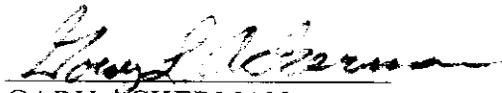
STEVEN LATOURETTE  
Member of Congress



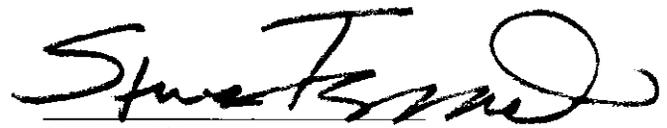
NYDIA VELAZQUEZ  
Member of Congress



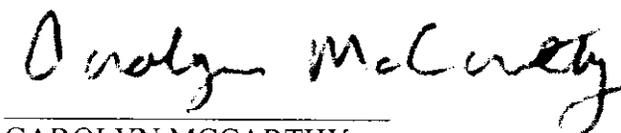
YVETTE CLARKE  
Member of Congress



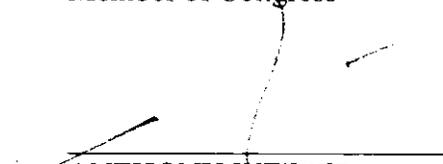
GARY ACKERMAN  
Member of Congress



STEVE ISRAEL  
Member of Congress



CAROLYN MCCARTHY  
Member of Congress



ANTHONY WEINER  
Member of Congress

*Diane E. Watson*

DIANE WATSON  
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DAN LUNGREN  
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*Brian Higgins*

BRIAN HIGGINS  
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*Gwen Moore*

GWEN MOORE  
Member of Congress

*Brian P. Bilbray*

BRIAN BILBRAY  
Member of Congress