Re: Combating Child Pornography

During the past two years, my Office has met with legislators, parent groups, educators and other stakeholders who have demanded that children be protected from sexual exploitation through the Internet. To meet this challenge, I have adopted an aggressive, multi-pronged approach ranging from criminal investigations and prosecutions, to cooperative efforts with industry, to the creation of educational programs. Yet more still can and must be done, especially by those who provide Internet access or host Internet content, to prevent the victimization of the most vulnerable members of our society—children. I am, therefore, calling upon you to assist me in meeting this challenge. Specifically, I ask that you affirmatively work with my Office to impede predators’ use of the Internet to view and transmit heinous images of child sexual abuse by denying access to child pornography websites, regardless of whether or not you host these websites.

To achieve this goal, I request that you obtain from NCMEC its list of Uniform Resource Locators (URL) that contain child pornography. This list can be obtained by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NCMEC. For your convenience, attached is a copy of this MOU.

Last week, the National Cable & Telecommunications Association (NCTA) announced that the cable operators on its Board of Directors agreed to sign NCMEC’s MOU and to use NCMEC’s list of URLs to ensure that servers they own or control are not hosting websites on NCMEC’s list. While I commend cable operators for taking this step, I believe that more can and should be done.
Electronic service providers should also utilize NCMEC’s list to deny access to child pornography websites that they do not host. By taking the pro-active step of denying access to these illegal websites, your company can make a powerful statement that it will not be party to the continued victimization of the most vulnerable members of our society—children.

I would appreciate a response by August 22, 2008 indicating whether you will obtain NCMEC’s list of identified child pornography URLs and work with my office to utilize NCMEC’s list to deny access to child pornography websites, regardless of whether or not you host these websites.

If you have any questions, please contact Jason Orlando, Special Assistant to the Attorney General, at 609.292.8640.

Sincerely,

Anne Milgram
Attorney General