

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**STATEMENT OF PATRICK A. TRUEMAN  
REGARDING THE QUESTIONING OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HOLDER ON OBSCENITY LAW  
ENFORCEMENT**

Today in a U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah confronted Attorney General Eric Holder about his policy of enforcement of Federal laws against illegal adult pornography or “obscenity” as it is known in the law. Such enforcement is at a standstill at the Department. The Attorney General indicated that he will “certainly enforce the law.”

I thank Sen. Hatch for taking the lead in the U.S. Congress on this critical matter and I hope many more Congressional leaders will work with Sen. Hatch to encourage the Attorney General to enforce obscenity laws.

We are in a crisis. The great and widespread harm caused by pornography consumption is an untreated pandemic. Because of this, a growing chorus of voices across America is clamoring for enforcement of Federal laws against illegal adult pornography. Prominent national and state family groups as well as anti-sex trafficking groups have banded together in what we are calling The War on Illegal Pornography to urge enforcement of Federal obscenity laws. We are also calling attention to the harm from pornography.

Children of all ages are being exposed to obscene hardcore adult pornography on the Internet which can interfere with their psychological and moral development and lead to sexual misconduct, including sexual abuse of other children. The proliferation of this material on the Internet and elsewhere is also a significant factor in the growth of child pornography because for many individuals what begins as an attraction to hardcore adult pornography leads to viewing child pornography. In addition to causing harm to children, addiction to obscene hardcore adult pornography also contributes to the breakup of marriages and the breakdown of families. Sexual violence against women is a prominent feature in most obscene hardcore adult pornography and is contributing to sexual degradation and sexual violence against women, to on-the-job sexual harassment, and to the demand for women trafficked into prostitution.

I hope all Americans will follow the lead of Sen. Hatch and encourage Attorney General Holder to vigorously prosecute all major producers and distributors of obscene hardcore adult pornography.

Below is the question asked of the Attorney General by Sen. Hatch.

**Obscenity Enforcement**

***Q: “How is this administration enforcing federal law prohibiting sexually explicit material that meets the Supreme Court’s definition of obscenity?”***

***I also asked this of your Republican predecessors because, in my judgment, they took a misguided and narrow approach to law enforcement in this area.***

***There has been a pattern at the Department of Justice to prosecute only the most extreme obscene materials. This particular type of material may virtually guarantee a conviction but is not widely produced or consumed and, therefore, its prosecution has little impact on the obscenity industry.***

*This approach of moving the prosecution line out to the fringe signals that material that is just as obscene though less extreme, is let off the hook. I believe that approach is misguided and contributes to the proliferation of obscenity that harms individuals, families, and communities.*

*Currently, there is an Obscenity Prosecution Task Force at the Department of Justice. Will you allow the director of that task force to enforce federal obscenity laws without restricting him to the most extreme obscene material?"*

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