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Senator Lindsey Graham slams Mark Zuckerberg for 'having a product that is killing people'

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Social media bosses were told 'you have blood on your hands' as they faced a grilling on the dangers their platforms bring to children.

The heads of social media giants Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, and Snapchat were being grilled by the US Senate Judiciary Committee in Washington.

The committee had earlier heard that internal Meta documents made public during a lawsuit estimated 100,000 children were sexually harassed on its platforms every day.

'You have a product that's killing people. When we had cigarettes that were killing people, we did something about it - maybe not enough. You gonna talk about guns, we have the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives... [but] nothing here, there's not a damn thing anybody can do about social media, you can't be sued' said Senator Graham. He then said internal Meta emails showed Zuckerberg was warned about the dangers of his apps, but decided not to hire 45 people to 'do a better job of policing this'.

'So the bottom line is you can't be sued. You should be, and these emails would be great for punitive damages, but the courtroom's closed to every American abused by all the companies in front of me,' he continued.

He added social media was the last industry he would give blanket immunity from liability to, and it was time to repeal laws that did so. 'After years of working on this issue with you and others, I've come to conclude the following: social media companies as they're currently designed and operate are dangerous products,' Graham said. 'They're destroying lives, and threatening democracy itself. These companies must be reined in, or the worst is yet to come.'

Senator Coons responded to Zuckerberg's reference to a National Academy of Sciences study that found 'at the population level' there was no proof of a link between social media and harm to young people: 'Well it may not be at the population level, but I'm looking at a room full of hundreds of parents who have lost children,' he said. 'Our challenge is to take the data and make good decisions about protecting families and children from harm.'

Coons then said that when a door flew off Alaska Airlines flight 1282 earlier this month, dozens of planes were grounded for safety checks, even though no one died. But nothing at all ever happened for social media companies, he said.

'There are no tools to hold the company accountable. Instead, survivors and advocates are left to plead with these companies to choose safety over profit,' added US Senator Dick Durbin, who heads the judiciary committee.

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