

Chris Taggart

From: Janet Vieth <no-reply@example.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 1, 2020 7:16 PM
To: governor@mt.gov; cooneyemail@aol.com; Jason.Ellsworth@mtleg.gov; David.Bedey@mtleg.gov; contactdoj@mt.gov; Ravalli County Clerk & Recorder; Paige Trautwein; Dan Whitesitt; Chris A. Hoffman; Jeff Burrows; Ravalli County Commissioners Office; Greg Chilcott; Ravalli County Sheriff Office
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support Rise Up For Children Today

I stand with Operation Underground Railroad (<https://www.ourrescue.org>) and their founder Timothy Ballard in the fight against child sex trafficking.

Sexual exploitation of children has exponentially increased during the COVID-19 period, when infrastructure that protects kids has been removed and they are spending an unprecedented amount of time online. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) has experienced a 90.46% increase in CyberTipline reports between January to June 2020, versus the same time period in 2019. In other words, reports of child abuse cases are MILLIONS higher this year than they were last year, and the numbers are rising.

When resources for law enforcement and government victim services are threatened, the first programs to go are those that conduct proactive investigations, including the child crime units. Small police forces with limited resources respond to the reactive cases, from homicides to burglaries; the cases that fall at their desk every day. Unfortunately, child sex trafficking and online child exploitation are the types of crime you have to proactively search for in the deepest, darkest corners, which means more time and more resources.

We call on our community and civic leaders to prioritize children and the measures and agencies that protect them! As legislative leaders, you have an obligation to rise up for children and give a voice to those who cannot speak for themselves. I encourage you to put the children first. Let them be heard and do everything YOU can do to protect them!

Thank you

Janet Vieth,

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