



**THE HON PETER DUTTON MP  
MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS**

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Senator Lindsey Graham  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510, USA

*Lindsey,*  
Dear Senator Graham

I would like to begin by thanking you for your hospitality during my visit to Washington, D.C. in March. I benefited enormously from the trip, both during my time at the White House and my meeting with you. I was buoyed by our common commitment to ensuring law enforcement agencies are equipped to protect children from the abhorrent crime of sexual abuse.

True to that commitment, I was pleased to see the Lawful Access to Encrypted Data Bill introduced for the consideration of the United States Senate as an avenue to ensure law enforcement agencies have lawful access to encrypted communications.

The risks to our children have only intensified with the COVID-19 pandemic. With children spending more time online, reports of child sexual abuse have risen. I understand that in March 2020 alone, the US-based National Center for Missing and Exploited Children received more than two million reports of online child sexual abuse – an increase of 106 per cent from March 2019 to March 2020. This unprecedented volume of reports raises the urgency to ensure encryption does not prevent the detection and investigation of crimes that harm children.

The Australian Government is proud of its legislative efforts on this issue to date and welcomes the United States' proposed legislation to safeguard law enforcement agencies' lawful access to the data and content they need to investigate and prosecute serious crimes – including crimes against children.

Lawful access to encrypted communications to combat serious crimes is one of the most serious challenges facing law enforcement agencies worldwide. Companies can and should work with law enforcement agencies to overcome technological obstacles to investigating serious crimes, while also maintaining the security of their systems.

I look forward to future opportunities to support your efforts to address this issue and wish you good health during this challenging time.

Yours sincerely *+ kind regards,*

*Peter Dutton*

PETER DUTTON *22/07/20.*