

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1

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By: **Senators Serafini, Bates, Eckardt, Edwards, Hershey, Hough, Jennings, Ready, Reilly, Salling, Simonaire, and Waugh**

Introduced and read first time: January 15, 2018

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Exposure of Minors to Pornography – Degradation of Public Health**

3 FOR the purpose of declaring that the exposure of minors to pornography and pornographic
4 material is a public health hazard in the State that is leading to the degradation of
5 the health and well-being of State residents; finding that the proliferation of
6 pornography accessible to minors causes certain health effects that affect State
7 institutions and all State residents; encouraging all parents of minors to protect their
8 children from exposure to and the viewing of pornographic material; and generally
9 relating to the degradation of public health caused by the exposure of minors to
10 pornography.

11 WHEREAS, During a 1-year period, 42% of Internet users who are minors reported
12 being exposed to pornography, and 66% of Internet users who are minors exposed to
13 pornography reported that the exposure was unintentional; and

14 WHEREAS, The exposure of minors to pornography increases as Internet saturation
15 rates increase; and

16 WHEREAS, A minor is more likely to be exposed to pornography if the minor
17 possesses risk factors including a high risk of depression or delinquency or if the minor is
18 a victim of harassment; and

19 WHEREAS, The exposure of minors to pornography detrimentally affects the health
20 and safety of State residents, including increasing the risk for illegal sexual behavior and
21 sexual violence; and

22 WHEREAS, Minors exposed to pornography are more involved in sexual activities;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Exposure to pornography results in higher incidences of sexually risky
25 behavior among young adults; and



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1 WHEREAS, The exposure of minors to pornography is significantly associated with
2 minor-to-minor production and distribution of child pornography and with sexting; and

3 WHEREAS, Of the minor males exposed to pornography, 42% viewed pornography
4 that depicted violence against women; and

5 WHEREAS, The exposure to and use of pornography by minors is a risk factor for
6 adolescent sexual offenses and sexually aggressive behavior by minors, particularly among
7 males; and

8 WHEREAS, Young males exposed to pornography are more likely to engage in
9 aggressive and antisocial behavior; and

10 WHEREAS, According to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence
11 Survey, 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men will be raped; and

12 WHEREAS, Men who view pornography are significantly less likely to intervene as
13 a bystander, and report an increased behavioral intent to commit rape; now, therefore, be
14 it

15 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the General
16 Assembly of Maryland declares that the exposure of minors to pornography and
17 pornographic material is a public health hazard in the State that is leading to the
18 degradation of the health and well-being of State residents; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of Maryland finds that the proliferation of
20 pornography accessible to minors causes long-term health effects that affect State
21 institutions and all State residents; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of Maryland encourages all parents of
23 minors to protect their children from exposure to and the viewing of pornographic material;
24 and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
26 Legislative Services to the Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor of Maryland; the
27 Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; the Honorable
28 Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates; and the Honorable Brian E. Frosh,
29 Attorney General of Maryland.