



Maryland Counseling Association, Inc. is a Branch of the American Counseling Association  
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02/19/24

The Honorable Senator Katie Fry Hester  
**Finance Committee**  
3 East  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY FOR SB739** – Algorithmic Addiction Fund-Establishment

Dear Senator Hester,

Thank you for sponsoring SB739 and taking steps to address an essential need to shift the influence of social media usage. We appreciate the Finance committee taking the time to read and accept our written testimony regarding how youth are affected by addictive algorithms used by social media companies. The Maryland Counseling Association (MCA) continues to engage with our state elected officials who represent those who we serve as well as members of our professional body. Our membership covers all counties throughout the state of Maryland with 500 members and counting.

Addictive algorithmic practices impose maladaptive behaviors for youth, which negatively impact healthy friendship making and healthy relationship building. There are youth who experience increased anxiety and depression due to excessive social media usage and social media engagement. The research supports the need for a [change](#).

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

- Section G.1.IV, line 17, to include language that prevention studies and outcomes will include parental and caregiver education, guidance for parents and caregivers, and strategies parents and caregivers can implement to decrease negative effects of algorithmic additions on social media, increase digital and media literacy, and develop protective factors for digital and media usage.

Parents are in need of support to foster change in the outcomes of the addictive algorithms.

The Maryland Counseling Association is in support of SB739 with our recommendation added to the bill.

Sincerely,

*Kerri*

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