

SENATE BILL 602

J1
SB 739/24 – FIN

6lr0732
CF HB 715

By: Senator Hester

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2026

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

Algorithmic Addiction Fund – Establishment

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Algorithmic Addiction Fund as a special, nonlapsing
4 fund; requiring interest earnings of the Fund to be credited to the Fund; requiring
5 the Secretary of Health to develop certain goals, objectives, and indicators relating
6 to algorithmic addiction treatment and prevention efforts and to consult with certain
7 stakeholders on a certain basis to identify recommended appropriations from the
8 Fund; and generally relating to the Algorithmic Addiction Fund.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
10 Article – State Finance and Procurement
11 Section 6–226(a)(2)(i) and (ii)
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

14 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
15 Article – State Finance and Procurement
16 Section 6–226(a)(2)(iii)212. and 213.
17 Annotated Code of Maryland
18 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

19 BY adding to
20 Article – State Finance and Procurement
21 Section 6–226(a)(2)(iii)214. and 7–332
22 Annotated Code of Maryland
23 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

24 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
25 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – State Finance and Procurement

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 6-226.

2 (a) (2) (i) This paragraph does not apply in fiscal years 2024 through 2028.

3 (ii) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and unless
4 inconsistent with a federal law, grant agreement, or other federal requirement or with the
5 terms of a gift or settlement agreement, net interest on all State money allocated by the
6 State Treasurer under this section to special funds or accounts, and otherwise entitled to
7 receive interest earnings, as accounted for by the Comptroller, shall accrue to the General
8 Fund of the State.

9 (iii) The provisions of subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph do not
10 apply to the following funds:

11 212. the Department of Social and Economic Mobility Special
12 Fund; [and]

13 213. the Population Health Improvement Fund; AND

14 **214. THE ALGORITHMIC ADDICTION FUND.**

15 **7-332.**

16 (A) IN THIS SECTION, “FUND” MEANS THE ALGORITHMIC ADDICTION
17 FUND.

18 (B) THERE IS AN ALGORITHMIC ADDICTION FUND.

19 (C) THE PURPOSE OF THE FUND IS TO RETAIN THE AMOUNT OF
20 SETTLEMENT REVENUES DEPOSITED TO THE FUND IN ACCORDANCE WITH
21 SUBSECTION (F)(1) OF THIS SECTION.

22 (D) THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SHALL ADMINISTER THE
23 FUND.

24 (E) (1) THE FUND IS A SPECIAL, NONLAPSING FUND THAT IS NOT
25 SUBJECT TO § 7-302 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

26 (2) THE STATE TREASURER SHALL HOLD THE FUND SEPARATELY,
27 AND THE COMPTROLLER SHALL ACCOUNT FOR THE FUND.

28 (F) THE FUND CONSISTS OF:

7 (2) MONEY APPROPRIATED IN THE STATE BUDGET TO THE FUND; AND

8 (3) INTEREST EARNINGS OF THE FUND.

10 (I) CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT THROUGHOUT THE
11 STATE TO DETERMINE WHERE RESOURCES ARE NEEDED AND BEST PRACTICES FOR
12 ALGORITHMIC ADDICTION PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, AND TREATMENT;

17 (III) ALGORITHMIC ADDICTION INTERVENTION SERVICES;

18 (IV) ALGORITHMIC ADDICTION PREVENTION SERVICES,
19 INCLUDING THE ORGANIZATION OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION
20 CAMPAIGNS TO PREVENT ALGORITHMIC ADDICTION AND PROMOTE DIGITAL AND
21 MEDIA LITERACY, INCLUDING FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES;

22 (V) RESEARCH AND TRAINING FOR ALGORITHMIC ADDICTION
23 TREATMENT AND PREVENTION, AND SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH,
24 INCLUDING FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES; AND

25 (VI) SUPPORTING AND EXPANDING OTHER EVIDENCE-BASED
26 INTERVENTIONS FOR ALGORITHMIC ADDICTION PREVENTION AND TREATMENT.

(2) AFTER SATISFYING THE REQUIREMENTS OF PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, ANY UNSPENT FUNDS IN THE FUND MAY BE EXPENDED BY THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

30 (H) (1) THE STATE TREASURER SHALL INVEST THE MONEY OF THE FUND
31 IN THE SAME MANNER AS OTHER STATE MONEY MAY BE INVESTED.

3 (I) (1) EXPENDITURES FROM THE FUND MAY BE MADE ONLY IN
4 ACCORDANCE WITH THE STATE BUDGET.

5 (2) FOR CIVIL PENALTIES RECEIVED BY THE STATE FROM ANY
6 SOURCE RESULTING, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, FROM A JUDGMENT AGAINST OR
7 SETTLEMENT RELATING TO CLAIMS CONCERNING HARM TO CHILDREN FROM THE
8 USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE IMPROPER USE OF ALGORITHMS:

20 (J) (1) MONEY EXPENDED FROM THE FUND FOR THE PROGRAMS AND
21 SERVICES DESCRIBED UNDER SUBSECTION (G) OF THIS SECTION IS SUPPLEMENTAL
22 TO AND IS NOT INTENDED TO TAKE THE PLACE OF FUNDING THAT OTHERWISE
23 WOULD BE APPROPRIATED FOR THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

27 (k) THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH SHALL:

1 AND ADVOCATES, TO IDENTIFY RECOMMENDED APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE FUND;
2 AND

3 (3) ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 1 EACH YEAR, REPORT TO THE
4 GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT
5 ARTICLE, ON:

6 (I) AN ACCOUNTING OF TOTAL FUNDS EXPENDED FROM THE
7 FUND IN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING FISCAL YEAR BY:

8 1. USE;

9 2. IF APPLICABLE, JURISDICTION; AND

10 3. BUDGET PROGRAM AND SUBDIVISION;

11 (II) THE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND PROGRESS TOWARD
12 ACHIEVING THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES DEVELOPED UNDER ITEM (1) OF THIS
13 SUBSECTION; AND

14 (III) THE RECOMMENDED APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE FUND
15 IDENTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITEM (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

16 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

17 (a) Section 1 of this Act shall take effect contingent on a judgment by a federal or
18 State court against or settlement with technology conglomerates, technology companies,
19 social media conglomerates, or social media companies relating to any claims made or
20 prosecuted by the State to recover damages for violations of State law.

21 (b) Within 5 days after a judgment or settlement described in subsection (a) of
22 this section is awarded or approved, the Attorney General shall notify the Department of
23 Legislative Services.

24 (c) Section 1 of this Act shall take effect on the date the notice is received by the
25 Department of Legislative Services in accordance with subsection (b) of this section.

26 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, subject to Section 2 of this
27 Act, this Act shall take effect June 1, 2026.