Alexander Miles, alex@joinbreakthru.com

Chairman Wilson and committee members, my name is Alex Miles and I'm the founder and CEO of a tech startup called Breakthru. We are proudly headquartered in Baltimore.

Our platform matches high school and college students to scholarships, educational resources, career opportunities and mentors that can boost their likelihood of success in life. So far, 65,000 students have downloaded our app – with 60% being girls and young women and 75% coming from underserved communities.

When we built our platform, we very consciously asked young people what they wanted to see from it. They were very clear to us – they didn't want another vanity-driven app based on likes that create more anxiety in their lives.

We took their feedback seriously and have implemented strong protections for what we do with their data. Every user has to accept our data use practices before they start using the app. Every time their data is shared with a third-party, we provide them a warning.

Our company is currently valued at $12 million. And if we wanted to sell our users' data, it could probably be three times that. But profiting off the sale of their personal data is not the right thing to do. For our industry to build the trust of young people, we need to be transparent and honest with them. We owe them a duty of care.

That's why I'm here today – to urge you to support the Maryland Age Appropriate Design Code.

In the UK, where a similar law has been in place since September 2021, tech companies are already complying and it's already making a difference in the experience of young people online.

Don't Maryland children deserve the same types of protections? I certainly believe so, and that's why I urge your support for this essential legislation. Thank you.

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