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HB 1082 – Commercial Law – Protection of Minors from Unfiltered Tablets or Smartphones

Using mobile devices such as Smartphones and Tablets, younger and younger children are accessing internet pornography. The average age of first exposure is 11 years old, with children under the age of 10 accounting for 22% of online porn consumption of those under the age of 18. Children in the US with a significant problem with pornography completed an online survey which showed 87% were males and 13% were females. Of these, 75% were exposed to porn between the ages of 9 and 13.

Internet pornography, often violent in content, has become sex education for many children. Such a “sex educator” is indeed dangerous as children “accept, learn from, and may emulate behaviors portrayed as normative, attractive and without risk.”

Children are accessing pornography effectively as easy as the click of a button on a device that fits in a pocket or backpack. With only about 16% of parents using filters or parental controls on such devices, the explosion of pornography across our culture is causing significant harm to the developing minds of our youth. In 2014, The Journal of American Medical Association Psychiatry reported that “Pornography consumption is associated with decreased brain volume.” In 2016, Psychology Today article by Dr. Phillip Zimbardo, Stanford University, asserted that “if we continue to deny that porn can be a problem, we are effectively denying [teens and pre-teens], many of them underage, help and guidance.”

Neurosurgeon, Dr. Donald J. Hilton, Jr. published in the journal of Socioaffective Neuroscience & Psychology, that “[A]ddiction is a risk for children and youth who continually access pornographic materials....an extension of reward-based learning that can physically alter the brain and affect behavior later.”

The journal, Violence Against Women, reported in 2010 that the so-called “soft porn” has been replaced by graphic, extreme, and degrading content that is not only damaging young brains, but skewing perceptions as to what is normal. The article asserted that images portraying physical and verbal aggression were directed towards women and girls 94.4% of the time.

The business model of the pornography industry has changed with the majority of the porn sites offering free access. In 2016 users, many of them children, watched 23 billion videos on free sites online in one year, translating to 4.6 billion hours of porn watched without filtered content to protect children.

The use of filters by parents has been ineffective as many parents who install parental control software, 4 out of 5 never actually turn it on. In 2002, the Supreme Court agreed that protecting minors from certain internet content must be done with the “least restrictive means available.” The Court went on to promulgate that given the rapid evolution of the technology of the internet, alternatives should be sought upon consideration of the relative restrictiveness and effectiveness of alternatives.

HB1082 represents a least restrictive approach which allows parents to opt out of the protection if they so choose.

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE. PROTECT OUR MOST VALUABLE LEGACY TO THE
FUTURE.

SUPPORT HB1082