



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

DAWN LUEDTKE
COUNCILMEMBER
DISTRICT 7

February 14, 2023

The Honorable Delegate Luke Clippinger
Taylor House Office Building, Room 101
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

SUBJECT: Support HB 600 with Amendments

Dear Chairman Clippinger and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I write in support of House Bill 600, authorizing the creation of a Task Force on Preventing and Responding to Non-Consensual Sexual Imagery. We live in a time where content creation and dissemination are rapid, and individuals purporting to exercise a First Amendment speech right may not always appreciate that they have crossed over into the realm of criminal conduct. This topic warrants a closer examination from a multidisciplinary lens in an effort to reduce victimization, prevent occurrence, and understand the most efficient tactics for holding perpetrators responsible and accountable for their actions.

Roughly one in eight adults in the United States have experienced sexually explicit image-based abuse.¹ This number is continuing to grow, with young adults, women, and members of the LGBTQ+ community being among the most vulnerable.² This issue also impacts a large number of youth, though exact numbers are unknown because youth are more likely to attempt to resolve the issue among peers for fear of judgment from adults.³ Victims of non-consensual pornography often report fears of going out in public, decreased trust in relationships, employment challenges, difficulty seeking help, and increased depression and anxiety.¹

Given the volume of youth affected by this issue, whether as victims or perpetrators, the Task Force would benefit from including at least one of the following: A representative of the Maryland State Department of Education, a representative of the Department of Juvenile Services, a representative of the Maryland Center for School Safety, and/or a representative appointed by the Maryland Association of Student Councils. This would also help to inform

¹ <https://www.bu.edu/sph/news/articles/2020/the-social-consequences-of-nonconsensual-pornography/>

² <https://www.naag.org/attorney-general-journal/an-update-on-the-legal-landscape-of-revenge-porn/>

³ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/14732254211030570>

educational outreach opportunities for communicating with students and parents regarding the dangers associated with this conduct and how to seek redress for victims.

I am optimistic that the work of the Task Force authorized by this legislation will be fruitful in developing concrete strategies moving forward. If you have any questions regarding the foregoing, please feel free to contact my office.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dawn Luedtke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "L".

Dawn Luedtke
Councilmember, District 7
Montgomery County