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Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building, Room 231
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 9, 2024

Bill: House Bill 603 – Consumer Protection – Online Products and Services – Data of Children (Maryland Kids Code)

Position: Support

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychological Association (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral-level psychologists throughout the state, is writing in **SUPPORT of House Bill 603 – Consumer Protection – Online Products and Services – Data of Children (Maryland Kids Code)**, which will result in a safer Internet environment for children in Maryland. Additionally, this bill will address how companies operating in Maryland collect, store, and use children’s personal private data. Online contributions to poorer mental health outcomes for children are at the forefront of parent’s minds, and are ongoing in our public discourse. Even the best prepared families with the tightest controls on devices cannot truly control their children’s content exposure and experiences under the current system. At present Maryland’s children are encountering predators on social media platforms who negatively impact their mental health and neurodevelopment. Access to the Internet has brought the world’s predators into our homes through our devices. These companies have known of this problem, have ignored this problem, and can solve this problem. This bill is a first step in a change of direction for keeping Maryland’s children safe and their data protected.

Thank you for considering our comments on HB 603. If we can provide any additional information or be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the Chair of MPA’s Legislative Committee, Dr. Stephanie Wolf, at mpalegislativcommittee@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Corrado, Psy.D. .
Brian Corrado, Psy.D.
President

Stephanie Wolf, JD, Ph.D.
Stephanie Wolf, JD, Ph.D.
Chair, MPA Legislative Committee