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TOGETHER WE CARE

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Chairman C.T. Wilson, House Economic Matters Committee
Maryland House of Delegates

In support of HB 1311

MCAP appreciates this bill which seeks to solve a huge problem facing families today that is beyond solving by parents alone - the dangers to the safety of children presented by unfiltered internet-connected devices.

The approach taken by this bill offers a technically simple, elegant solution: turn **on** filtering by default.

To grasp the problem, I recommend that you watch a **free** 2020 documentary video entitled [CHILDHOOD 2.0](#). Here's a sample of disturbing trends and statistics:

53% of American children get a cell phone by age **11**. They spend many hours daily on these devices which are worse, addictively, than slot machines. 27% of all unfiltered Internet content is explicit or pornographic, and nearly 50% of children have been exposed to it by age **8**. In 2019, porn sites received more Internet traffic than Amazon, Twitter and Netflix combined. Social media apps are saturated with explicit material that can be shared via back door methods like chats.

In 2021 alone, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children received nearly **85 million** images, videos, and other files related to child sexual abuse and exploitation – and those are only what were **reported**. Much of today's porn contains physical and verbal aggression and violence.

Regarding smart phones and tablets - technology is best when it's easy and intuitive to use. This is **NOT** the case with filtering technology today. Families need help.

We parents know that manufacturers **can** turn on the filtering. Government regulates safety for other materials harmful to minors, like tobacco and alcohol. We don't put those potentially dangerous products freely in the hands of minors? No. Why should internet connectivity for minors be so **unregulated**?

We urge a favorable report on HB 1311.

Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Cairns
Education Chairperson
Maryland Coalition Against Pornography

