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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY

SB: 780: Internet-Connected Devices and Internet Service Providers - Default Filtering of Obscene Content (Maryland Online Child Protection Act)

Good afternoon, Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier and members of the Senate Finance Committee. Senate Bill 780, *Maryland Online Child Protection Act*, will protect our most vulnerable constituency... our YOUTH, by preserving their innocence.

SB 780 will also establish safeguards, so that our children are not exposed to leud content that is currently easily accessible to them. Often, minors can easily stumble upon things they do not need to be exposed to.

As **amended** SB 780 would require a **manufacturer** of cell phones, tablets, and gaming devices that are sold to minors in Maryland to have default filters installed to block obscene material and content. This bill is important because so many of our youth get caught up in scams... as well as, lured into dangerous situations by way of electronic devices, because of the lack of filtering and restrictions. SB 780 will eliminate parents from having to take the additional steps needed to take to activate these filters. However, adults over 18 can disable these filters, but age verification is mandatory, which balances child safety with adult access.

In closing, we cannot continue to lose our young people to online predators, and having their minds filled with obscene material; therefore, SB 780 provides for balanced safeguards, and it empowers parents to better shield and protect their kids from inappropriate content without limiting rights or access for adults.

Therefore, I urge a **FAVORABLE** report for SB 780 as amended.