

Bill SB571
February 14th, 2024

In Support:

My name is Sam Park, I am a freshman at Eastern Technical High School in Baltimore county and I am testifying in favor of the SB0571 Bill.

I find it insane for teenagers to open up an app or online service and in a matter of seconds, our personal data is getting sucked out of us. Whether it is scrolling through social media, giving up our privacy, or just being exposed to harmful material affects us as teenagers in a harmful and negative way. My brother is 11 years old and believes jokes about the discrimination of groups of people are “funny.” He had gotten a phone last year and downloaded multiple social media apps like instagram and tiktok. I wasn’t aware of the things he was exposed to until I saw him looking at inappropriate jokes or what some would call “dark humor” that were posted on instagram. The fact of him even getting to these posts was probably because it was my brother’s fault, but it was the fact that he is repeatedly getting these harmful posts since it is recommended to him by instagram. This bill would deal with cases like this where these apps abuse our data in order to push out harmful content. Another thing with this bill is it’s not just about social media specifically but also online services that are well known that I feel like are targeted to teenagers. For example, Temu, a Chinese online marketplace has taken the information of teenagers all over the country in return for “free” or incredibly cheap toys/items. I say this was targeted for teenagers at first because it was heavily shown on social media and in order to obtain these “free” items you would have to make other people download the app and sign up, giving not just their information but they’re friends as well. Temu has been heavily accused of stealing consumer data such as their phone number, SSN, browser history, and location data to monitor user’s activities across apps and websites. Even though there is no real confirmation if online services like Temu are abusing our data, this bill would ensure that me and many other teenagers’ data is protected. Teenagers like me already have a lot going on and we use social media and these apps to try and cope or entertain us. Having these traps of harmful material should not be this accessible on the internet and is why I believe this bill is important and necessary for children and teenagers like myself.

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