

BILL NO: House Bill 0005
TITLE: Criminal Law - Child Pornography - Artificial Intelligence Software
COMMITTEE: Judiciary
HEARING DATE: February 4, 2025
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Women's Law Center of Maryland is dedicated to ensuring the physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy of women throughout the State. The clients that we represent have all experienced intimate partner violence, which may include physical, mental, and sexual abuse.

House Bill 0005 defines "computer-generated image" to include images created through the use of artificial intelligence software as prohibited forms of child pornography. Federal law prohibits the production, advertisement, transportation, distribution, receipt, sale, access with intent to view, and possession of any child sexual abuse materials, including realistic computer-generated images.

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children receives thousands of reports of Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) or sexually exploitative content that involved generative AI (GAI) technology each year. GAI CSAM portrays computer-generated children in graphic sexual acts and can be generated at will by the user of certain GAI platforms. GAI can also be utilized to create deepfake sexually explicit images and videos by using an innocent photograph of a real child to create a computer-generated one. There have also been reports where bad actors have tried to use this illegal GAI content to extort a child or their family for financial means.

This bill recognizes that the creation and circulation of GAI CSAM is harmful and illegal. Even the images that do not depict a real child put a strain on law enforcement resources and impede identification of real child victims. For the children seen in deepfakes and their families, it is devastating. The Women's Law Center of Maryland contends that we must support to children who are victims of explicit imagery online regardless of how the imagery was created, and support HB 0005 to ensure that laws adequately protect child victims.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland believes that this bill will prevent many children and their families from being targeted and humiliated by their abusers with AI-generated images of them engaging in non-consensual sexual imagery. For all these reasons we urge a favorable report on HB 0005.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland is a non-profit legal services organization whose mission is to ensure the physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy of women in Maryland. Our mission is advanced through direct legal services, information and referral hotlines, and statewide advocacy.