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INNOVATION ECONOMY

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February 17, 2025

The Honorable Luke Clippinger
Chair
House Judiciary Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Taylor House Office Building, Room 101
6 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 670 (Lopez) - Civil Actions - Unsolicited Obscene Material – Favorable with Amendments

Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of TechNet, I'm writing to share comments on HB 670 related to obscene material.

TechNet is the national, bipartisan network of technology CEOs and senior executives that promotes the growth of the innovation economy by advocating a targeted policy agenda at the federal and 50-state level. TechNet's diverse membership includes dynamic American businesses ranging from startups to the most iconic companies on the planet and represents over 4.5 million employees and countless customers in the fields of information technology, artificial intelligence, e-commerce, the sharing and gig economies, advanced energy, transportation, cybersecurity, venture capital, and finance. TechNet has offices in Austin, Boston, Chicago, Denver, Harrisburg, Olympia, Sacramento, Silicon Valley, Tallahassee, and Washington, D.C.

Artificial intelligence has the potential to help us solve the greatest challenges of our time. It is being used to predict severe weather more accurately, protect critical infrastructure, defend against cyber threats, and accelerate the development of new medical treatments, including life-saving vaccines and ways to detect earlier signs of cancer. However, recognizing and addressing the genuine risks associated with AI is crucial for its responsible advancement.

TechNet and its member companies are committed to keeping all users safe online. We appreciate the intent of this bill and agree conceptually with its overarching premise. TechNet and its members want to ensure that bad actors are the ones held liable, and ultimately accountable, and not the platform or online service they may have used to distribute obscene material. As such, we request the following Section 230 language be included in the bill to align with federal law:

- **“As such terms are defined in 47 U.S.C. § 230, an interactive computer service is not liable for content provided by another person in violation of this act.”**

Regarding knowledge standards, we request that the phrase **“and intentionally”** be added after **“knowingly”** on page 2, line 27.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our suggested changes and please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Margaret Durkin

Margaret Durkin
TechNet Executive Director, Pennsylvania & the Mid-Atlantic