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Legislative District 41
Baltimore City

Health and Government Operations
Committee

Chair

Health Occupations and
Long-Term Care Subcommittee

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Joint Committee on Administrative,
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Testimony of Delegate Samuel I Rosenberg
Before the Appropriations Committee
In Support of
House Bill 715
Algorithmic Addiction Fund – Establishment

Chair Barnes and Members of the Committee:

Children throughout our state have fallen victim to a growing algorithmic addiction public health crisis. It is fueled by social media platforms engineering algorithms that maximize engagement at any cost. House Bill 715 aims to fight back against this trend by establishing a nonlapsing fund to receive settlements from lawsuits against social media companies and invest those funds in research, prevention, intervention, and treatment of algorithmic additions that are manufactured by social media companies.

In 1999 I sponsored House Bill 751, to establish the Cigarette Restitution Fund (CRF) using funds received by the state from the 1998 Master Tobacco Settlement Agreement with the tobacco industry. Since its inception, the CRF has distributed over \$1 billion towards public health research and economic conversion throughout the state. In 2019, I sponsored House Bill 1274 to establish the Opioid Restitution Fund and in 2022 I sponsored House Bill 794 to establish the Opioid Restitution Advisory Council, which has received over \$192 million to underwrite our state’s response to the opioid crisis.

Today, we face a similar public health crisis and similar large-scale litigation with major companies. In December 2025, the Pew Research Center reported that over one-third of teens use at least one social media platform “almost constantly”. A 2025 University of Michigan study found that adolescents and young adults average nearly seven hours of daily screen time. The same study also found that:

- 60% believe they are addicted to their phone, and 66% believe it negatively impacts their grades;
- 73.8% report worsened sleep due to social media;
- 72.5% report negative effects on their self-esteem; and

- 72.5% believe social media affects them overall negatively.

Our state as well as many of our school districts are actively involved in lawsuits with several major social media platforms addressing this harm to youth mental health and data privacy. In January, our state, among many others, reached a settlement with TikTok that totaled \$92 million to be split among the states involved. Our state is similarly involved in a lawsuit against Meta over the company's advertising, asserting that its deliberate addictive features harm children's mental health.

House Bill 715 would create a framework similar to our existing restitution funds. to ensure that if the State prevails in pending litigation against social media companies, any settlement or judgment funds would be dedicated to addressing the harm those companies caused. **I request a favorable report on House Bill 715.**

March 10, 2026