



February 27, 2026

The Honorable Kriselda Valderrama
House Committee on Economic Matters
Room 230, Taylor House Office Building, 6 Bladen Street,
Annapolis, MD 21401-1912

Dear Chair Valderrama,

We are writing today in support of H.B.0952, which establishes new regulatory requirements for operators of “companion chatbots”—artificial intelligence (AI) systems designed to provide human-like, adaptive responses and sustain ongoing relationships with users for social interaction. The bill requires operators to implement, maintain, and publicly disclose protocols to prevent chatbots from presenting content related to self-harm, suicidal ideation, or suicide to users expressing such thoughts, and to prevent sexually explicit content from being produced or presented to minor users. We ask for your support in favor of this legislation to protect all children in the state of Maryland.

As you may be aware, RAINN is the nation’s largest anti-sexual assault organization. Founded in 1994, RAINN created and operates the National Sexual Assault Hotline (800.656.HOPE and rainn.org) and carries out programs to support victims, educate the public, improve public policy, and help companies and organizations improve the way they prevent and respond to sexual violence.

The negative impacts of AI chatbots to children’s safety are clear. Without safeguards, these systems may present sexually explicit material to minors or fail to respond appropriately when users express thoughts of self-harm or suicide. Studies show that exposure to explicit content can erode a child’s sense of boundaries and increase vulnerability to exploitation, while inadequate crisis intervention can leave young people without critical support during moments of distress.

That is why we were pleased to see H.B.0952 address the platforms that enable this abuse to occur. This bill will protect children and vulnerable users by requiring

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companion chatbot operators to implement safeguards against self-harm and sexually explicit content, provide crisis referrals, increase transparency, and ensure accountability.

Children and teenagers must be protected from the dangers of AI chatbots and social companions. We urge you to support H.B.0952 in your committee. Thank you for your continued leadership and for supporting victims of sexual violence in Maryland.

Sincerely,
Zoey Scheinblum-Brewer
Policy and Grassroots Coordinator