



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Official Sponsor Testimony in Support of SB 932: Consumer Protection – Social Media
Platforms – Display of User Location
Senator Kevin M, Harris**

Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Hayes, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee.

During the age of social media, it has become increasingly evident that in order to increase platform engagement, social media companies continue to take advantage of and manipulate users through algorithms that keep them hooked. The algorithm is designed to be addictive, presenting users with divisive, polarized, and often, extremist content.

At the same time, we know that a large portion of the most extreme social media content come from pages that are not located in the United States. International actors are looking to profit from user engagement at the expense of public trust and democratic stability in the United States.

SB 932: Consumer Protection – Social Media Platforms – Display of User locations, requires a person operating a social media platform to display the general geographic location of content produced by adult users.

General geographic location refers to the user's city and country, not precise geolocation.

Further, SB 932 seeks to protect children by exempting minors from having to display their location.

SB 932 seeks to protect free speech while simultaneously empowering Marylanders to know where the content they are viewing originates. This bill will provide transparency for Marylanders so they can better assess whether the content they are viewing was created by good faith actors or by foreign entities.

SB 932 will protect our democratic institutions by helping social media users identify disinformation produced by international actors.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on SB 932.