

THE COALITION TO PROTECT MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

Our Mission: To combine and amplify the power of organizations and citizens working together to keep children safe from abuse and neglect.

We strive to secure budgetary and public policy resources to make meaningful and measurable improvements in safety, permanence, and wellbeing.



**HB0924: Child Exploitation Material – Civil and Criminal Actions
(Safe Kids Act)**

House Judiciary Committee

March 4, 2026

Position: SUPPORT

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children is a consortium of organizations and individuals formed in 1992 who are concerned about the care of Maryland's most vulnerable children and work together to educate and promote meaningful child welfare reform. **CPMC urges a favorable report on HB0924 - *Child Exploitation Material – Civil and Criminal Actions (Safe Kids Act)*.**

This bill takes important steps to protect children by bringing Maryland into the 21st century when it comes to considering online platforms and images of child exploitation materials.

HB0924 ensures that any online platform that is knowingly allowing child exploitation materials to be distributed or shared can be held accountable under the law. This is critical in providing the Attorney General's office, law enforcement, and other entities with the tools needed to keep individuals AND companies/platforms from hiding behind the anonymity afforded online.

This bill also adds the definition of "computer-generated image" to include images created through the use of artificial intelligence software as the term pertains to provisions of law related to child sexual abuse material. There is often the misperception that AI-generated child sexual abuse material is a "victimless" alternative to photos of known children. However, when artificial intelligence is used to create the image of a child, it must pull from an existing pool of images on the internet. Therefore, although the final product may not represent any one child, AI would necessarily pull from existing images of children, and many *actual* children's images would be used. Thus, creating AI-generated child sexual abuse material is most definitely *not* a victimless act.

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children believes this bill should be supported to bring Maryland up to date when it comes to ensuring the safety and confidentiality of children/minors in modern times. It is for these reasons that the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children **urges a favorable report on HB0924 - *Child Exploitation Material – Civil and Criminal Actions (Safe Kids Act)*.**¹

¹ Members of CPMC represented by this written testimony include – Center for Hope; Child Justice; Citizens Review Board for Children; Court Appointed Special Advocates (Baltimore County); Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY); Maryland Children's Alliance; Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault; Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence; Brigit VanGraafeiland

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children

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