

My name is Anna Derbyshire. I work with CitizenGO USA on national family policy and regularly engage with international bodies, including the United Nations, on issues affecting parental rights and child protection.

I am also a mother of ten.

Across both national and international policy discussions, one principle remains clear: parents have the primary right and responsibility to protect their children. That includes the authority to shield them from exploitation and to seek meaningful consequences when harm occurs.

I can tell you this is not theoretical. My own family has been directly affected by the online exploitation industry. We have had to seek counseling for our children because of harm connected to online material. There was no meaningful civil recourse available to address that damage.

Criminal laws are essential, but they do not always give families a direct path to accountability when online platforms knowingly allow or develop exploitative material. House Bill 924 provides that path.

HB 924 allows families to bring a civil action when a child is depicted in or exposed to unlawful child exploitation material, and it authorizes the Attorney General to enforce these provisions. Those tools matter.

The bill also updates Maryland law to address artificial intelligence. If an AI-generated image is indistinguishable from a real minor, it must be treated with the same seriousness as other forms of exploitation.

At the same time, the legislation protects service providers that are not responsible for creating or developing the material. The focus is clear accountability for those who knowingly facilitate exploitation.

This is a measured and responsible step to strengthen protections for children and give families meaningful options when harm occurs.

I respectfully urge a favorable report.

Thank you.