



**TECHNET**  
THE VOICE OF THE  
INNOVATION ECONOMY

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January 28, 2024

The Honorable Jackie Glass  
Chair  
House Communications, Technology and Innovation Sub-Committee:  
Communications  
Virginia House of Delegates  
General Assembly Building, Room 1011  
201 North 9th Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

*RE: HB 1161 (Wyatt) - Consumer Data Protection Act; social media, parental consent.*

Dear Chair Glass and Members of the Subcommittee,

On behalf of TechNet, I'm writing to offer comments on HB 1161, related to social media and parental consent.

TechNet is the national, bipartisan network of technology CEOs and senior executives that promotes the growth of the innovation economy by advocating a targeted policy agenda at the federal and 50-state level. TechNet's diverse membership includes dynamic American businesses ranging from startups to the most iconic companies on the planet and represents over 4.2 million employees and countless customers in the fields of information technology, e-commerce, the sharing and gig economies, advanced energy, cybersecurity, venture capital, and finance. TechNet has offices in Austin, Boston, Chicago, Denver, Harrisburg, Olympia, Sacramento, Silicon Valley, and Washington, D.C.

TechNet strongly believes children deserve a heightened level of security and privacy and there are several efforts within the industry to incorporate protective design features into their websites and platforms. Our companies have been at the forefront of raising standards for teen safety and privacy across the industry by creating new features, settings, parental tools, and protections that are age-appropriate and tailored to the differing developmental needs of young people. Our member companies are committed to providing a safe, age-appropriate experience for young people online; however, we are opposed to this bill's approach for several reasons.

Concerningly, this bill provides a one-size-fits-all approach for young people under a certain age without any regard for developmental differences among teens at different developmental stages. The term "Social media platform" is defined

broadly in the bill, with the potential to sweep in many more companies than intended.

HB 1161 would also require new standards for parental consent and would require the collection of more personal information, such as birthdates, addresses, government IDs, and credit and debit cards, all which conflict with data minimization principles.

This arrangement also assumes all teens can obtain the required consent and does not take into consideration unstable or abusive home environments, divorced parents, or parents without their own documentation, or who are unwilling to submit documentation. Furthermore, it's also important to recognize that a child, or teenager, has a right to privacy. For example, perhaps a teenager is exploring ideas not shared by their parents and wishes to do so in a safe and private environment.

TechNet's member companies prioritize the safety and digital well-being of children who access their sites and platforms. Our members strongly believe children deserve a heightened level of protection and TechNet members empower families to create online experiences that fit the needs of their individual children. For the reasons stated above, TechNet is opposed to HB 1161. Thank you for your time and we look forward to continuing these discussions with you.

Sincerely,

*Margaret Durkin*

Margaret Durkin  
TechNet Executive Director, Pennsylvania & the Mid-Atlantic