



**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 1115 (Hodges) - Consumer Data Protection Act; social media platforms.*

Dear Chair Glass and Members of the Subcommittee,

On behalf of TechNet, I'm writing to offer comments on HB 1115, related to social media platforms.

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.

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 businesses than intended. Also

broad is the ban on practices, designs, and features of the social media platform. Many companies use apps for educational purposes and information sharing. These broad bans have the potential to limit the exchange of information and stifle business innovation.

In conclusion, the best way to keep young people safe online is by promoting the education of safe internet practices. We support policies that help prepare young people to be a successful part of a global, interconnected, and technology-driven economy. Such policies include supporting digital learning resources and technology integration in student learning environments, fully funded K-12 education, and rigorous computer science standards. Digital citizenship education is a top priority for TechNet and its member companies. Several businesses participate in the Digital Trust & Safety Partnership (DTSP), which outlines best practices for those operating in the digital space. We would suggest that concerned stakeholders proactively partner with organizations and companies supporting digital citizenship and online safety education.

For the reasons stated above, TechNet is opposed to HB 1115. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to continuing these discussions with you.

Sincerely,

*Margaret Durkin*

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