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February 20, 2023

The Honorable Robert Bell
Pocahontas Building, Room E606
900 East Main Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

RE: SB 1515 Minors; civil liability for publishing or distribution of harmful material on the Internet.

Dear Chairman Bell, Senator Stanley, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of TechNet, I respectfully submit the following comments for SB 1515, regarding minors and civil liability for publishing or distribution of harmful material on the internet.

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 more than five 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.

Online services enable freedom of expression for consumers, and companies have a vested interest in moderating their platforms to create a safe, welcoming online community for users. In order to ensure users understand the rules they are expected to follow, the industry has been at the leading edge of providing greater access and information regarding their moderation policies and practices.

While the intent of SB 1515 is laudable, TechNet requests the below changes to clarify the bill further:

- Add: "Substantial portion" means more than thirty-three and one-third percent of total material on a website, which meets the definition of "material harmful to minors" as defined by this Section.
- Add to Section 8.01-40.5. D. the italicized text: Nothing in this section shall be construed to impose liability on a provider or user of an

interactive computer service on the Internet, internet service provider, or its affiliates or subsidiaries, search engine, cloud service provider, new-gathering organization or bona fide news or public interest broadcast, website video, report, or event.

TechNet supports industry efforts to provide transparency about platforms' content moderation practices and their efforts to limit and remove harmful content. Thank you for your consideration of our proposed changes. TechNet looks forward to working with you and please don't hesitate to reach out should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Margaret Durkin

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