To: Chair Nathan Manning
          Vice Chair Michele Reynolds
          Ranking Member Paula Hicks-Hudson
          Senate Judiciary Committee
From: David Mahan
          Policy Director
          Center for Christian Virtue

Re: Support for SB217

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and esteemed members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is David Mahan and I am testifying on behalf of the Center for Christian Virtue, Ohio's largest Christian public policy organization. I am here today to support the passage of (SB217), which will help prevent the dissemination of AI-generated child sexual abuse material (CSAM) in Ohio.

So what's the big deal? Where are the victims?? Shouldn't we be focusing on more serious concerns??? These are some of the comments that you hear when folks attempt to minimize the disgusting and dangerous issue of AI Child Porn. But what does the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), the nation's largest and most influential child protection organization on missing and exploited children say? In 2023, NCMEC's CyberTipline received over 36 million reports of suspected child sexual exploitation, with thousands being related to AI generated CSAM, and they state unequivocally that, **"Generative AI Child Sexual Abuse Material is Child Sexual Abuse Material".** [1] While testifying before the US House Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Information, Technology and Government innovation, John Shehan, a Senior Vice President within NCMEC outlined the following ways that AI CSAM technology is harmful to children: [2]

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[1] https://www.missingkids.org/blog/2024/generative-ai-csam-is-csam
[2] https://www.missingkids.org/content/dam/missingkids/pdfs/final-written-testimony-john-shehan-house-oversight-subcommittee-hearing.pdf

- **Text to Chat:** Entering text to get a chat model to pretend it is a child and engage in sexually explicit chat.
- **Text to Text:** Entering text to generate guides/tutorials/suggestions on how to groom, sexually abuse, torture, and kill children.
- **Text to Image:** Entering text prompts to generate CSAM imagery or to alter previously uploaded files to make them sexually explicit.
- **Image to Image:** Uploading known CSAM and altering or adding new abusive elements (including bondage or other forms of abuse) to existing images.
- **Image to Image:** Uploading innocuous images of a child and generating sexually explicit or exploitative images of the child for personal gratification/sharing and also to use to perpetrate financial sextortion against a child (e.g., "nudify"/"unclothe"/"undress" apps).

One critical piece of information that must be understood when considering the potential harms of this technology is that all of the top CSAM watchdog organizations around the world agree that it is getting near impossible to decipher AI-generated content from the real thing. This is because real child victims are used to "train" the AI. Susie Hargraves, CEO of the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), made the following statement regarding the threat posed by AI,
"Our worst nightmares have come true. Earlier this year [2023], we warned AI imagery could soon become indistinguishable from real pictures of children suffering sexual abuse, and that we could start to see this imagery proliferating in much greater numbers. We have now passed that point. Chillingly, we are seeing criminals deliberately training their AI on real victims' images who have already suffered abuse. Children who have been raped in the past are now being incorporated into new scenarios because someone, somewhere, wants to see it." [3]

In a report published by the IWF in 2023 [4] focusing on a single dark web forum dedicated to child sexual abuse imagery, over the period of one month:

- **The IWF investigated 11,108 AI images which had been shared on a dark web child abuse forum.**

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[3] https://www.iwf.org.uk/news-media/news/worst-nightmares-come-true-as-predators-are-able-to-make-thousands-of-new-ai-images-of-real-child-victims/
[4] https://www.iwf.org.uk/media/q4zll2ya/iwf-ai-csam-report_public-oct23v1.pdf

- **Of these, 2,978 were confirmed as images which breach UK law – meaning they depicted child sexual abuse.**
- **Of these images, 2,562 were so realistic, the law would need to treat them the same as if they had been real abuse images.***
- **More than one in five of these images (564) were classified as Category A, the most serious kind of imagery which can depict rape, sexual torture, and bestiality.**
- **More than half (1,372) of these images depicted primary school-aged children (seven to ten years old).**
- **As well as this, 143 images depicted children aged three to six, while two images depicted babies (under two years old).**

In closing, I would like to quote a portion of a letter written to congress on September 5, 2023 by the National Association of Attorneys General, a bipartisan coalition of 54 state and territory attorneys generals:

*"While we know Congress is aware of concerns surrounding AI, and legislation has been recently proposed at both the state and federal level to regulate AI generally, much of the focus has been on national security and education concerns. And while those interests are worthy of consideration, **the safety of children should not fall through the cracks when evaluating the risks of AI".** [5]*

I would hope that this committee would be just as resolute and unified in support of protecting children by passing SB217 without delay.

Thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of this proposed legislation. If the committee has any questions for me, I will do my best to answer them.

The Center for Christian Virtue (CCV) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that endeavors to create an Ohio where God's blessings of life, family, and religious freedom are treasured, respected, and protected.   www.ccv.org –– (513) 733-5775

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[5] https://www.naag.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/54-State-AGs-Urge-Study-of-AI-and-Harmful-Impacts-on-Children.pdf