



May 21, 2024

State of Ohio  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
The Hon. Nathan J Manning, Chair  
The Hon. Michele Reynolds, Vice Chair

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee:

**Public Citizen submits this testimony in strong support of SB 217.**

On behalf of our 18,858 members and activists in Ohio, Public Citizen encourages the Senate Judiciary Committee to advance SB 217, a legislative proposal regulating intimate deepfakes. Deepfakes are fabricated content (videos, images, or audio) created with the use of generative artificial intelligence (A.I.) that depict a person saying or doing things that they never actually said or did in real life. An intimate deepfake is a fabricated depiction of an individual engaging in sexual acts.

There has been an exponential rise in the circulation of intimate deepfakes in recent years. In 2023, there were over 95,000 deepfake videos circulated online, a 550% increase from the year before<sup>1</sup>. Currently, 98 percent of all deepfakes circulated online over the years are intimate deepfakes<sup>2</sup>.

It is worth noting, the vast majority (99%) of those victimized by intimate deepfakes are women and girls. A study in Britain found that 99.6% of intimate images of children created through artificial intelligence were of girls, mainly between the ages of 7 to 13<sup>3</sup>.

Intimate deepfakes cause serious harm to innocent people<sup>4</sup>. Victims report experiencing significant emotional consequences and trauma<sup>5</sup>, as well as damage to their reputation and career. Last October, more than 30 teen girls at a highschool in New Jersey were violated when A.I. generated intimate images of

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<sup>1</sup> Home Security Heroes. (n.d.). 2023 State of Deepfakes: Realities, Threats, and Impact. Retrieved from Home Security Heroes: <https://www.homesecurityheroes.com/state-of-deepfakes/>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Internet Watch Foundation. (2023, October). How AI is being abused to create child sexual abuse imagery. Retrieved from Internet Watch Foundation: [https://www.iwf.org.uk/media/q4zll2ya/iwf-ai-csam-report\\_public-oct23v1.pdf#page=28](https://www.iwf.org.uk/media/q4zll2ya/iwf-ai-csam-report_public-oct23v1.pdf#page=28)

<sup>4</sup> Nelson, H. (2024, February 7). Taylor Swift and the Dangers of Deepfake Pornography. Retrieved from National Sexual Violence Resource Center: <https://www.nsvrc.org/blogs/feminism/taylor-swift-and-dangers-deepfake-pornography>

<sup>5</sup> Nickert, J. (2023, November 13). The Damage Caused by Deepfake Porn. Retrieved from HealthNews: <https://healthnews.com/mental-health/anxiety-depression/the-damage-caused-by-deepfake-porn/>

them were circulated around their school<sup>6</sup>. These girls reported feeling humiliated, exposed, and traumatized.

Intimate deepfakes can be used for monetary extortion as well. The FBI recently warned the public of “sextortion” schemes<sup>7</sup>, in which intimate deepfakes are used to extort victims for monetary gain. In addition to causing financial loss, victims report experiencing severe mental health issues and dozens have taken their own lives<sup>8</sup>.

Recent advances in the realm of A.I. have made it such that tools needed to create deepfakes are now widely accessible. It is now possible to create a minute long deepfake of someone in just half an hour<sup>9</sup>. Meanwhile, the quality of deepfake technology is improving rapidly, making it harder for the average person to detect a deepfake. This problem will only continue to grow exponentially as technology quickly advances.

Without regulation, anyone can fall victim to this traumatizing form of exploitation. New legislation like SB 217, which regulates the circulation of intimate deepfakes, is critical to protecting innocent people.

Seventeen states have already passed legislation regulating the circulation of intimate deepfakes, and numerous other states are working to pass similar legislation. This legislation has broad bipartisan support, with Republicans and Democrats alike introducing and supporting these bills.

Public Citizen strongly urges the Senate Judiciary Committee to move SB 217 forward in order to protect innocent people.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 217.

Respectfully Submitted,  
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<sup>6</sup> Blanco, A. (2023, November 3) Teen boys at New Jersey school accused of creating AI deepfake nudes of female classmates. Retrieved from Independent UK:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/deepfake-nude-westfield-high-school-nj-b2440793.html>

<sup>7</sup> Gans, J. (2023, June 6). FBI warns of ‘deepfakes’ in sextortion schemes. Retrieved from The Hill:

<https://thehill.com/policy/cybersecurity/4037204-fbi-warns-of-deepfakes-in-sextortion-schemes/>

<sup>8</sup> Siemaszko, C. (2022, May 8). "Sextortionists" are increasingly targeting young men for money. The outcome can be deadly. Retrieved from NBC News:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/sextortionists-are-increasingly-targeting-young-men-money-outcome-can-rcna27281>

<sup>9</sup> Home Security Heroes. 2023 State of Deepfakes. Retrieved from Home Security Heroes:

<https://www.homesecurityheroes.com/state-of-deepfakes/>