

## Testimony Before the Ohio House Judiciary Committee on House Bill 226

Chairman Thomas, Vice Chairman Mathews, Ranking Member Issacsohn, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee, thank you for considering my testimony today. My name is Tony Schroeder, and I serve as Chairman of the Putnam County Republican Party. I'm writing to strongly support House Bill 226, which would require app stores to get parental approval before kids can download social media apps.

I know how hard it is for parents to keep up with all the apps and websites their kids want to use. The internet moves fast, and most of us parents feel like we're always one step behind. These bills would give us a real tool to help protect our children.

A recent poll came out showing that Ohio parents support this idea by a landslide - 80% want app stores to require parental approval. That's not a close vote - That's Ohio families telling us they need help keeping their kids safe online.

The way these bills work makes sense. Instead of parents having to figure out dozens of different apps and their settings, everything would go through the app store where parents already manage their kids' phones. When a child tries to download a social media app, the parent gets a notification and can say yes or no. It's that simple.

This isn't about stopping kids from using technology. It's about making sure parents have a say in what their children are exposed to online. We all know there's good stuff and bad stuff on the internet - These bills help parents make sure their kids can access the good while being protected from the bad.

As Republicans, we believe in limited government and personal responsibility. This approach does both. It doesn't create new government programs or spend taxpayer money. It simply requires tech companies to work with parents instead of around them. The decision stays with families where it belongs.

App stores like Apple and Google already have the ability to do this. They ask for parent permission when kids want to buy something. All we're asking is that they do the same thing when kids want to download apps that might not be appropriate for their age.

The current system isn't working for Ohio families. Kids can easily lie about their age and download whatever they want, and their parents are left in the dark until problems show up. These bills would close that gap and give parents back control over their children's online activities.

I've talked about this issue with parents all across Putnam County, and they're frustrated. They want to do right by their kids, but the system makes it nearly impossible.

This legislation puts parents back in charge. It's a common-sense solution that protects kids while respecting family values. The polling shows that parents across party lines want this protection. Now it's time for the legislature to act.

I urge you to pass House Bill 226. Give Ohio parents the tools they need to protect their children in today's digital world.

Thank you.