

## **Proponent Testimony on House Bill 302**

*Chris Varwig, At-Large Member, Toledo Public Schools Board of Education*

*Ohio House Judiciary Committee*

*October 8, 2025*

Chair Thomas, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Synenberg, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to be here today. My name is Chris Varwig, and I serve as an at-large member of the Toledo Public Schools Board of Education. I grew up in TPS schools, raised a daughter who graduated from TPS, and I have spent years as a parent volunteer, tutor, and booster club president before joining the board. And, now, have grandchildren in TPS. When I talk about the role technology plays in kids' lives, it comes from both personal and professional experience.

What I hear most often from parents is that they feel like they are in a constant tug-of-war. They want their kids to have access to the tools they need for school and daily life, but they worry about what comes with that access—whether it is bullying, risky content, or apps that don't have strong safeguards in place. As a board member, I have also seen how those issues spill into the classroom. A student who has been harassed on social media brings that stress into school the next day, and it disrupts their learning. Teachers and counselors do what they can, but families should not have to face this alone.

That is why I support House Bill 302. It gives parents the ability to step in where it matters most, on apps with chat or sharing features, without forcing them to approve every small download. It also ensures students can still reach the resources they rely on, whether for homework or health, without unnecessary delays. Most importantly, it keeps responsibility on the companies that design these platforms. Parents and schools are already doing their part. It is time for developers to do theirs.

The bill also takes a smart approach to privacy. Instead of requiring children to share detailed age information across every app, it uses a simple "minor or adult" signal, and only in situations where that information is truly needed. That is a safer and more practical approach for families.

From my perspective as a parent, grandparent, an alum, and a member of the school board, this bill gets the balance right. It protects children while still supporting families and schools, and it makes sure technology companies are held accountable. I urge you to move it forward. Thank you for your time.