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Senate Financial Institutions, Insurance, and Technology Committee

SB 175 Sponsor Testimony

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Chairman Wilson and Members of the Committee – thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 175, which would require app stores, developers, and operating system providers to share in the responsibility of protecting children’s safety online.

As a grandfather of ten young children, I am concerned about the access they have to online content that is obscene and disturbing with little to no safeguards. We have seen legislation that safeguards specific types of content, such as pornography, but I believe the safeguards must be implemented and shared by content developers and distributors alike without compromising the privacy of our children and grandchildren through unnecessary data sharing.

The fundamental goals of this bill are as follows:

- Prevent unnecessary data collection such as government IDs
- Limit information sharing to the apps that need it, such as social media
- Ban targeted ads for children which can be manipulative or inappropriate
- Put parents in control by requiring user-friendly parental content filters

Senate Bill 175 requires both app stores and operating system providers to request the user’s age at the time of account creation, and it prohibits app developers from providing minors access to adult content. It further requires app developers to declare which content or features are for adults and which are for minors, and requires them to build easily accessible parental controls into their apps.

There have been bills passed in states like Utah and Texas that make similar claims of protecting children, but I believe they do not address the privacy risks that this bill targets. Rather than requiring users to share sensitive documents with millions of developers, this bill narrows the information sharing to those apps that we might consider “high-risk” for children, such as social media.

Chairman Wilson and members of the committee, thank you for hearing my testimony today. I welcome any questions you may have at this time.