

Matthew Bye
Ohio Senate Financial Institutions, Insurance and Technology Committee
Testimony, SB 175
Tuesday, Oct 14, 2025

Chairman Wilson, Vice Chair Lang, Ranking Member Craig and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 175 today.

My name is Matthew Bye and I'm a managing director at Google where I work on our Android ecosystem. I previously worked at the Federal Trade Commission as an attorney in Washington, DC.

At Google, we have a long-standing commitment to protecting young users and we strive to create age-appropriate experiences for everyone on our platforms. We provide minors with industry-leading content, wellbeing tools, and privacy protections, backed by age assurance. We also disable personalized ads, block access to mature content on YouTube and Google Play, and enable our strictest SafeSearch settings.

I'm here today to share Google's support for Senate Bill 175. We believe this is the smartest, safest, and most effective way to protect children in Ohio's digital world.

At its core, this bill is about a simple idea: working together to protect kids. It takes everyone—app stores, phone makers, and app developers—working together as a team to support parents and minors in making the right decisions for their families online. We recognize that Google has an important role in this ecosystem, along with others. This bill makes sure every player is doing their part.

Smart, Targeted, and Private Approach. SB 175 allows app stores to signal to relevant apps that a particular user is a minor, without sharing their specific age or identity.

The app must then provide parental controls and get a parent's permission to provide any mature content. The app must also refrain from sending personalized ads to that minor.

This bill is effective because it's both targeted and privacy-preserving. It focuses protections where they are needed most. And it is built on common sense—app developers shouldn't be collecting sensitive data from every user when it isn't necessary. Instead of demanding every Ohioan verify their age for every app, it uses a simple, privacy-safe "age signal."

This bill is also smart about *when* app stores share an age signal. Do calculators or PDF viewer apps need to know if a user is 15 or 50? No, they don't. This bill rightly focuses only on the apps that choose to offer different experiences for kids and adults—like social media. This protects kids without creating unnecessary burdens for the thousands of small developers in Ohio making great, safe apps for everyone.

Finally, this bill goes beyond apps by giving parents powerful tools to filter obscene material on web browsers and search engines, creating a stronger, multi-layered defense for their kids.

The Right Responsibilities for the Right People

SB 175 places responsibility to do the right thing for children on developers of higher-risk apps or apps that have chosen to provide different experiences to adults and minors. This is common sense — developers know their apps best.

In summary, the bill requires three critical things:

1. **Keep adult content away from kids.**
2. **Get a parent's permission** before a child can use features that may not be suitable for them.
3. **Ban personalized ads** for children.

The Ohio Way vs. Flawed Alternatives

By taking this balanced approach, we think Ohio can lead the nation and avoid the serious mistakes we've seen in other states.

And to be very direct about why the alternative is flawed:

We don't believe that EVERYONE in the whole state should have to age verify just to access basic online services. It's invasive and unnecessary. Imagine having to show your driver's license just to download a weather app.

We don't believe that app stores should broadcast sensitive age data of the state's children to millions of developers globally that don't need it. It's a privacy and child safety nightmare. We urge a more balanced approach.

We don't believe that parents should be forced to parent in a certain way, like the other model requires. Instead, we should make it easier on them to make the choices that are right for their families.

Finally, the alternative model is like locking the front door but leaving all the windows wide open. Kids can still get to the same content through a web browser or pre-loaded apps. It provides a false sense of security.

Senate Bill 175 is different. It's targeted. It's comprehensive. And it respects the privacy of Ohioans. It's the right way forward, and we are proud to support it.

Thank you.