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Chairman Uecker, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety, and Veterans Affairs Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 315, which would designate the sixth day of October as S.M.A.R.T. stands for Social Media Awareness, Respect and Timing Parent Day otherwise known as S.M.A.R.T. Parent Day.

As technology helps us connect with one another in newer and more efficient ways, unfortunately, many of our children become victims of online harassment and bullying. In the United States alone, according to the Centers of Disease Control, over 28% of United States students in grades 6-12 experienced bullying. To put that into context, it is estimated from data available on the National Center for Education Statistics that there are 41,138,000 million students in those grades in 2018 in the United States. 28% of that amount is approximately **11,518,640**.

There is a strong correlation between cyber bullying and suicide. A new study compiled by the Pediatric Academic Societies Meeting recently found that in the last decade, the number of children and teens admitted to children's hospitals for thoughts of suicide or self-harm has more than doubled.

House Bill 315 is a bill that helps parents become more alert to the signs of social media and cyber bullying displayed by their children. Unfortunately, many victims are reluctant to let adults know they are being bullied because they are ashamed or afraid that their access to technology will be taken away.

A constituent in my district brought this legislation to my attention after her own experience of cyber bullying led her to make awareness and prevention of this problem her passion.

Again, Chairman Uecker and members of the Senate Local Government committee thank you for taking the time to listen to sponsor testimony on House Bill 315. I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.