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INNOVATION ECONOMY

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March 17, 2025

The Honorable Anne Carney, Senate Chair
The Honorable Amy Kuhn, House Chair
Joint Committee on Judiciary
Maine State Legislature
Augusta, ME 04330

Re: LD 844 – An Act to Regulate Social Media Use by Minors Under 16 Years of Age

Dear Chair Carney, Chair Kuhn, and members of the Committee:

TechNet is the national, bipartisan network of technology CEOs and senior executives that promotes the growth of the innovation economy by advocating a targeted policy agenda at the federal and 50-state level. TechNet's diverse membership includes dynamic American businesses ranging from startups to the most iconic companies on the planet and represents over 4.4 million employees and countless customers in the fields of information technology, artificial intelligence, e-commerce, the sharing and gig economies, advanced energy, transportation, cybersecurity, venture capital, and finance.

TechNet respectfully opposes LD 844, which would require social media platforms to obtain parental consent for the use of social media accounts by individuals under 16 years of age.

Our industry has a longstanding commitment to provide parents and guardians with resources to help ensure a safe online experience for their children, and the industry has been at the forefront of educating parents and guardians about online safety. As part of this commitment, industry has created a wide range of resources to enable parents and guardians to choose the right digital experience for their family. For example, Mobile Parent (www.mobileparent.org) – a recent campaign the wireless industry together created – provides educational materials and industry-backed tools for the parents and guardians of connected children. It details parental control features and offers guides and tips for safe mobile device usage. Instead of a government-mandated one-size-fits-all filtering requirement, the most effective approach to ensuring the digital safety of children is through parental empowerment and educational collaboration – policymakers and all stakeholders working together to educate consumers about the tools that are available to them, especially in today's ever-evolving world of technology.

Additionally, there are many commercial, as well as free, content filtering and blocking solutions available that enable consumers to protect their families and themselves from illegal or inappropriate content. These solutions are widely available as both integrated and independent solutions for a wide range of technologies.

Stringent age verification to access online platforms requires the collection, processing, and storage of users' sensitive personally identifiable information, and should be avoided. Age verification conflicts with data privacy best practices like data minimization included in the various comprehensive data privacy bills under consideration by this Committee.

Similar laws in other states have been ruled unconstitutional by the courts. In fact, a federal judge just yesterday fully enjoined a similar law in California, noting it was likely in violation of the First Amendment.

For these reasons, we ask that the committee not advance LD 844 and instead focus the Committee's energy on moving a comprehensive data privacy law that provides heightened protections for minors' data like those in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire.

Sincerely,



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