



May 12, 2025

Maine  
Committee on Judiciary  
The Honorable, Senator Anne Carney, Chair  
The Honorable, Representative Amy Kuhn, Chair

Dear Members of the Committee:

**Public Citizen submits this testimony in strong support of LD 1944.**

On behalf of our over 4,800 members and activists in Maine, Public Citizen encourages the Judiciary Committee to advance LD 1944, a legislative proposal regulating intimate deepfakes. Deepfakes are fabricated content (videos, images, or audio) created with the use of generative artificial intelligence (A.I.) that depict a person saying or doing things that they never actually said or did in real life. An intimate deepfake is a fabricated depiction of an individual nude and/or engaging in sexual acts.

There has been an exponential rise in the circulation of intimate deepfakes in recent years. In 2023, there were over 95,000 deepfake videos circulated online<sup>1</sup>. Deepfake fraud worldwide has increased by more than 10 times from 2022 to 2023<sup>2</sup>. Currently, 98 percent of all deepfakes circulated online are intimate deepfakes<sup>3</sup>. On Telegram alone, there are at least 50 bots that claim to create explicit photos or videos of people with only a couple of clicks. These bots have over 4 million monthly users combined<sup>4</sup>.

It is worth noting, the vast majority (99%) of those victimized by intimate deepfakes are women and girls. A study conducted by the Center for Democracy and Technology found that 15% of students were aware of at least one intimate deepfake of someone associated with their school<sup>5</sup>. This issue deeply affects both adults and minors.

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<sup>1</sup> Home Security Heroes. (n.d.). 2023 State of Deepfakes: Realities, Threats, and Impact. Retrieved from Home Security Heroes: <https://www.homesecurityheroes.com/state-of-deepfakes/>

<sup>2</sup> Cruz, B. (2024, September 26). 2024 Deepfakes Guide and Statistics. Retrieved from Security.org: <https://www.security.org/resources/deepfake-statistics/>

<sup>3</sup> Home Security Heroes. (n.d.). 2023 State of Deepfakes: Realities, Threats, and Impact. Retrieved from Home Security Heroes: <https://www.homesecurityheroes.com/state-of-deepfakes/>

<sup>4</sup> Burgess, M. (2024, October 15). Millions of People Are Using Abusive AI 'Nudify' Bots on Telegram. Retrieved from WIRED: <https://www.wired.com/story/ai-deepfake-nudify-bots-telegram/>

<sup>5</sup> Williams, K. (2024, October 10). Minors Are On the Frontlines of the Sexual Deepfake Epidemic — Here's Why That's a Problem. Retrieved from: Tech Policy Press: <https://www.techpolicy.press/minors-are-on-the-frontlines-of-the-sexual-deepfake-epidemic-heres-why-thats-a-problem/>

**Below are a few examples of how intimate deepfakes have been used to cause harm to innocent people. These are just a few of the many thousands of instances of this type of abuse that happen every year:**

One man in Britain made 173 intimate deepfake posts online of 20 women between March 2023 and May 2024. One of the explicit posts he made was of a 16-year-old girl on her prom night. Along with the images, he also posted the women's names and social media handles, leading to incredible distress, fear and humiliation for the victims.<sup>6</sup>

In Massachusetts, a man who had stalked a professor for six years, used various AI platforms to create deepfake images that impersonated the professor. The professor's personal and professional information, such as her home address and birthday, were shared online in conjunction with the images. Users were even encouraged to park outside of the Professor's house<sup>7</sup>.

Intimate deepfakes can be used for monetary extortion as well. The FBI recently warned the public of "sextortion" schemes<sup>8</sup>, in which intimate deepfakes are used to extort victims for monetary gain. In addition to causing financial loss, victims report experiencing severe mental health issues and dozens have taken their own lives<sup>9</sup>.

Recent advances in the realm of A.I. have made it such that tools needed to create deepfakes are now widely accessible. It only takes a few minutes to create a deepfake<sup>10</sup>. Meanwhile, the quality of deepfake technology is improving rapidly, making it harder for the average person to detect a deepfake. A study conducted by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers found that even four years ago, that more than 75% of the time, people could not correctly identify good quality deepfake videos<sup>11</sup>. This problem continues to grow as technology quickly advances.

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<sup>6</sup> Adams, L. (2025, April 4). Man jailed for using AI to create deepfake porn. Retrieved from BBC News: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cewgxd5yewjo>

<sup>7</sup> McQue, K. (2025, February 1). A man stalked a professor for six years. Then he used AI chatbots to lure strangers to her home. Retrieved from The Guardian:

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/feb/01/stalking-ai-chatbot-impersonator>

<sup>8</sup> Gans, J. (2023, June 6). FBI warns of 'deepfakes' in sextortion schemes. Retrieved from The Hill:

<https://thehill.com/policy/cybersecurity/4037204-fbi-warns-of-deepfakes-in-sextortion-schemes/>

<sup>9</sup> Siemaszko, C. (2022, May 8). 'Sextortionists' are increasingly targeting young men for money. The outcome can be deadly. Retrieved from NBC News:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/sextortionists-are-increasingly-targeting-young-men-money-outcome-can-rcna27281>

<sup>10</sup> Bond, S. (2023, March 23). It takes a few dollars and 8 minutes to create a deepfake. And that's only the start. Retrieved from NPR:

[https://www.npr.org/2023/03/23/1165146797/it-takes-a-few-dollars-and-8-minutes-to-create-a-deepfake-and-thats-only-the-start#:~:text=Shannon%20Bond-.It%20takes%20a%20few%20dollars%20and%208%20minutes%20to%20create.And%20that's%20only%20the%20start&text=Ethan%20Mollick-.Ethan%20Mollick%2C%20a%20business%20professor%20at%20the%20University%20of%20Pennsylvania's.video%20of%20himself%20\(right\).](https://www.npr.org/2023/03/23/1165146797/it-takes-a-few-dollars-and-8-minutes-to-create-a-deepfake-and-thats-only-the-start#:~:text=Shannon%20Bond-.It%20takes%20a%20few%20dollars%20and%208%20minutes%20to%20create.And%20that's%20only%20the%20start&text=Ethan%20Mollick-.Ethan%20Mollick%2C%20a%20business%20professor%20at%20the%20University%20of%20Pennsylvania's.video%20of%20himself%20(right).)

<sup>11</sup> Korshunov, P. & Marcel, S. (2021, June 11). Subjective and Objective Evaluation of Deepfake Videos. Retrieved from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers:

<https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/9414258>.

Without regulation, anyone can fall victim to this traumatizing form of exploitation. New legislation like LD 1944, which regulates the circulation of intimate deepfakes, is critical to protecting innocent people.

Thirty-nine states have already enacted legislation protecting all people from non-consensual intimate deepfakes. Thirty-five states passed legislation that protects adults from intimate deepfakes. All fifty states have introduced this legislation with legislation currently pending in many states. This legislation has broad bipartisan support, with Republicans and Democrats alike introducing and supporting these bills - many of these bills have been passed unanimously.

Public Citizen strongly urges the Judiciary Committee to move LD 1944 forward in order to protect innocent people.

Thank you, and we are happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

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