

Samantha Dunn
Scarborough
LD 2052

Members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,
My name is Samantha Dunn, and I am a developmental and behavioral pediatrician practicing in Maine. I want to be clear that I receive no funding from technology companies and that my observations and concerns come entirely from my professional experience and my care for children's health and development. I am writing in strong support of LD 2052, a resolve to study the use of technology in classrooms and the safeguards surrounding its use.

As a pediatrician, I see the impacts of excessive screen use on children every day. Research shows that too much time on devices can affect attention, focus, self-regulation, and the depth of learning. Further, the rapid proliferation of AI-enabled tools and gamified apps in schools raises new concerns. These platforms often prioritize engagement and rewards over comprehension and critical thinking, shaping behavior in ways that are not yet fully understood.

As a member of the Scarborough Alliance for Thoughtful Technology (SATT), I have witnessed first-hand how difficult it is for parents to get accurate information. School administrators have assured us that there is no student-facing AI, yet SATT later identified at least four instances of AI tools accessible on school-issued devices, including Smart Compose, ChatGPT, Google AI, and AI-powered spellcheck and grammar tools. Students as young as third graders have had access to these tools, which raises important questions about developmental appropriateness and privacy. At the same time, our local school district has provided only estimates of screen time rather than accurate, detailed data by grade and subject.

LD 2052 is a crucial step toward transparency, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making. Maine families deserve accurate information and safeguards to ensure that educational technology supports healthy development, rather than undermining it.

Thank you for your time and for your service to Maine's students and families.

Samantha Dunn, DO

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