



PROTECTIONS AGAINST HARMFUL AI

Hearing of the
SENATE MAJORITY POLICY COMMITTEE

Monday, November 10, 2025

2:30 p.m.

TESTIMONY OF

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Introduction

Good afternoon, Chair Argall, Senator Pennycuick and members of the Senate Majority Policy Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and to provide testimony at today's hearing on protecting our youth against the harms of artificial intelligence.

My name is Angela Sperrazza, and I serve as the Chief Deputy Attorney General of the Child Predator Section of the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General.

The Child Predator Section has a long history with a clear purpose. It began in 1995 as the Child Exploitation Task Force, created to identify and arrest individuals who were creating, viewing, or distributing child sexual abuse material, or CSAM, and to target online predators through proactive undercover operations. Nearly 30 years ago, Pennsylvania recognized the need for a specialized task force dedicated to protecting children in the digital age.

By January 2005, as the internet became an ever-present part of our daily lives, the OAG recognized that the threat to children was evolving just as quickly. That task force became the Child Predator Section, expanding its mission to investigate and prosecute not only those who possess or distribute CSAM, but to anticipate new ways technology could be weaponized against children – including, most recently, the creation of AI-generated child sexual abuse material.

I share that history because it illustrates a fundamental truth of our work: when it comes to online crimes against children, standing still means falling behind. The predators evolve – and so must we.

That's why it is appropriate that we are hosted today by Senator Tracy Pennycuick who has long been a leader in giving law enforcement and prosecutors the tools that we need to protect children from exploitation. I know that Attorney General Dave Sunday truly appreciates the work that was done by the legislature to enable us to charge artificially created Child Sexual Abuse Material, or CSAM. General Sunday has made the protection of children one of the primary focuses of his administration and is eager to work with members of the legislature on initiatives to strengthen our efforts.

Senate Bill 1050 – sponsored Senator Pennycuick, along with Senators Martin and Baker – builds on that important work. It strengthens and modernizes our mandated reporter framework so that our laws keep pace with the realities of child exploitation in an increasingly digital and AI-driven world. The bill is not just timely – it is essential.

Senate Bill 1050

The bill brings continuity to child-protection law. It recognizes, just as Title 18 already does, that images created by AI-generated technology can themselves constitute abuse.

These synthetic or “deepfake” images are often indistinguishable from real photographs or videos. In our investigations, we regularly find them stored alongside traditional CSAM. Cybertips that begin investigations are in response to traditional and AI generated CSAM. Our cases start from an image of an identified child that has been shared countless times already or

from an AI generated image of child sexual abuse being shared for the first time. These images, for purposes of criminal investigations, are dealt with in the same manner. They are not harmless. They are not victimless. They are abuse – abuse of real children whose likenesses are manipulated, whose bodies are sexualized, and whose trauma continues every time those images are shared.

Pennsylvania addressed this reality last year when it became one of the first states to criminalize AI-generated CSAM under Title 18. Senate Bill 1050 simply ensures that Title 23 – our child protective services code – keeps pace with that criminal recognition and provides that needed continuity.

Creating an explicit duty for mandated reporters to notify authorities when they believe a child has been victimized through CSAM – traditional or AI-generated – is a critical step toward early investigation and intervention.

A single referral can lead to the identification of devices, online networks, service providers and offenders before further harm occurs. Early detection also allows identified victims to be entered into the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children database, helping track images in circulation and providing law enforcement with critical information. An AI generated image of a child in Pittsburgh can quickly be shared and create a cybertip anywhere. The sooner we can identify a child; the sooner law enforcement can determine if that child is currently in danger.

Mandated reporters hold a unique and vital position. They interact daily with children who may face situations far beyond their ability to navigate – AI exploitation is now one of those challenging situations.

Today, a child's photo that has been posted on social media, sent through an app, or even printed in a yearbook, can be digitally altered with basic tech tools. With widely available software, an image of any child can be rendered nude with a single click. Those AI generated or altered images can then be shared, weaponized, and traded. For the victims, the humiliation and fear are immediate and can leave them confused and vulnerable.

This bill helps ensure that when that happens it will be recognized and reported – so that law enforcement and child protective services can act quickly.

By reinforcing that creation or possession of any type of child sexual abuse material – whether real or AI-generated – is criminal conduct, Senate Bill 1050 sends a powerful and necessary message – Pennsylvania will not normalize the sexualization of children in any form.

The bill's clarification that acts involving the dissemination of intimate images or CSAM between minors are reportable offenses furthers that message. This clarification will promote consistency in responses and strengthen collaboration between prosecutors, child protective services, and mandated reporters.

This bill aligns our child-protection laws with our technological realities. It provides another tool to aid in respond to changing digital threats and reaffirms that digital exploitation of children is abuse.

Conclusion

Thank you for your time and dedication to this matter. I would be pleased to answer any questions you might have.