

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the issue of protecting youth from social media harm. My name is Ruby Dhillon, and I am a parent of three teenagers. Two years ago, on Halloween, I received a call from a local detective that turned our lives upside down. She informed me that AI-generated child sexual abuse material had been created of 60 young women in our community. I soon learned that my daughter was one of those victims.

I am here today to urge legislation to prevent this from happening to other children in PA. My daughter's images were sexualized without her consent, and have been released into a digital space where they are being copied, shared, and preserved indefinitely. We live in fear of where these images are, who is viewing them, and when they may resurface. She was just 14 years old in the images that were created of her. These are memories of events that she felt excited enough to share on her social media - pictures from her first concert, her first homecoming, and other normal teen moments, memories that have been stolen from her by this disgusting violation. She was a freshman in high school in those photos, and is a freshman in college now. A lot of time has passed - her entire adolescence - but this nudify technology is still readily available, and being used daily to exploit other children. I am here to ask that you ensure that no other family goes through this.

It is difficult to look back on the weeks that followed that detective's phone call. The shock was overwhelming, and none of us were prepared to handle it. Because this impacted so many families in a small community, the news just blew up. Everyone had an opinion, and some of those opinions were quite harmful. We had to listen to people say 'it's not that big of a deal' or 'the images aren't real anyway' and 'boys will be boys'. But those people did not have to witness what I did. They did not have to accompany their daughter to sit across from a detective and identify herself in nude photos she did not consent to. They did not have to watch their daughters go from being carefree to witnessing their loss of innocence and becoming angry, bitter, and distrustful. I watched her friend group, all victims of this abuse, go from being healthy, happy, and well adapted teens to becoming sick with mental health issues. In her friend group alone, we had girls dealing with depression, anxiety, panic attacks, eating disorders, hyperviolence, insomnia, nightmares, suicidal ideation, cutting, and self harm. As parents, we struggled to support our daughters, especially given the lack of resources and understanding surrounding this type of harm.

The impact of this case extends far beyond our family. This is a new and rapidly evolving form of abuse, and these girls are among its first victims. We didn't have a roadmap and there were limited resources at that time. But the lack of precedent does not lessen the harm, it amplifies it.

I am convinced that the problem is now worse, and that this is now happening in every school, and in the dark corners of basements in every neighborhood. Nudify technology is too available, and it is being marketed to young boys as 'harmless'. I cannot think of one single beneficial use of this kind of technology. Its only use is to exploit individuals, mostly children, and it is creating dangerous spaces where having an appetite for child pornography is normalized and acceptable. We don't need this technology in our society, within our children's reach, or being

used by other bad actors. PA needs to follow Minnesota's lead and become the second state to ban this technology.

When this violation happened to my daughter, she became frustrated with the lack of accountability and demanded change. She met with Attorney General Sunday, the office of the Governor, and several Senators and Representatives and bravely shared her story. She brought ideas for where we needed to improve laws and policies to protect other kids. Realistically, however, I don't think a 16 year old girl is the person who can fight this - lawmakers need to be much more vigilant and intentional about AI technology, social media, and how to prevent future harms.

On a broader note, I am deeply concerned about how children will interact with AI in the coming years, particularly in our classrooms. Last fall, my daughter advocated for a task force to study this exact issue, and Senator Pennycuick advanced legislation to create it. There is so much work we need to do. We must carefully evaluate when and how AI should be introduced in schools, ensuring it does not hinder formative development like critical thinking, writing, and social-emotional problem-solving. A recent MIT study entitled 'Your Brain on ChatGPT' showed using generative AI for writing tasks significantly reduced neural connectivity, brain engagement, and memory recall in adults. Now imagine that same technology being used in the formative years when child's neural connections are still actively developing.

Technology, social media, and AI are very much a part of our children's daily lives. However, it is important for us to reclaim some of the power and re-evaluate what is safe for their health, development, and wellbeing, and what needs additional regulation and guardrails from our legislative branches. Thank you so much for your time.