



TECHNET
THE VOICE OF THE
INNOVATION ECONOMY

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March 18, 2025

The Honorable Zack Stephenson
5th Floor Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: TechNet opposition to HF 1289

Dear Representative Stephenson,

On behalf of TechNet, we respectfully submit this letter of opposition to HF 1289 (Stephenson), a bill mandating government compelled speech on social media platforms on all users, not just children and adolescents.

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 4.5 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 members strongly believe that children deserve a heightened level of security and privacy online, and the industry is actively working to incorporate protective design features into apps, websites, and platforms. For example, some platforms have features for minors to set reminders to take breaks or establish settings that protect them from potential threats or unwanted contact. TechNet members are also including parents and guardians in their child's experiences via parental supervision tools. We believe that empowering parents and guardians and their children to have an informed dialogue about navigating the internet and social media, accompanied with providing them with necessary safety and security tools and features, is a strong approach to children's online wellbeing.

TechNet members view requirements for warning labels on social media platforms as a misguided way to ensure teens have safe, age-appropriate experiences online. Warning labels do not address parents' primary concerns around who is contacting their teens online and the content they see. Furthermore, warning labels may push teens to become desensitized to labels, making them ineffective, or worse, backfire by enticing teens to want to use labeled products even more.

This has been shown with cigarette warning labels and parental advisory labels on CDs, backed up with credible/recognizable third-party research from groups like

Harvard Business Review.¹ Unlike cigarettes and alcohol, which have a physically harmful impact on bodies there are many positive benefits to social media. Social media helps teens find things that are of interest to them, like sports teams they follow, causes they care about, and ways to get involved in their community. Social media platforms are not purely commercial in nature. Furthermore, warning labels don't offer meaningful protections or ways for parents to actively engage in their teens' experiences online

And lastly, the United States Supreme Court has ruled against broad restrictions on digital speech, such as in *Brown v. Entertainment Merchants Association (2011)*, where a law placing restrictions and labeling requirements on the sale or rental of "violent video games" to minors. As you know, many of the state legislative attempts to regulate social media are in the courts for a variety of reasons, which doesn't solve the concerns they are attempting to address.

For these reasons, TechNet respectfully opposes HB 3304. Thank you for considering our concerns, and please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Diers', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tyler Diers
Executive Director, Midwest
TechNet

¹ <https://hbr.org/2016/11/consumer-warning-labels-arent-working>