

Chair Stephenson and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Quorum, Minnesota's LGBTQ+ and Allied Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to express our serious concerns regarding HF 4138. While we share the goal of ensuring a safe digital environment for Minnesota's youth, the mechanisms proposed in this bill present unique and disproportionate risks to the LGBTQ+ business community and the vulnerable youth we serve.

Many of our members are "micro-influencers" and small business owners who built their livelihoods on the very platforms this bill seeks to restrict. By banning "targeted paid commercial advertising" for users under 16, this bill inadvertently severs the connection between LGBTQ-owned businesses and the next generation of consumers. Whether it is an all-ages drag brunch, a queer-affirming mental health clinic, or a local apparel brand, these businesses rely on specific targeting to find their audience in a crowded digital marketplace. HF 4138 creates a "compliance chill" that will hit marginalized entrepreneurs first and hardest.

For many LGBTQ+ youth in Greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities—especially those in unsupportive or hostile home environments—social media is not just "entertainment." It is a life-saving connection to community, identity-affirming resources, and crisis intervention. By mandating "verifiable parental consent" and giving parents a "veto" over a child's digital footprint, HF 4138 effectively forces youth to "out" themselves to access support. For a child in a home where their identity is not accepted, this bill doesn't provide safety—it provides a tool for surveillance and isolation.

The "age estimation" requirements create a dangerous incentive for platforms to increase data harvesting. To reach the mandated 90% confidence level, platforms will likely turn to facial analysis or biometric scanning.

We know from industry data that these AI systems frequently fail transgender and non-binary individuals, whose features may not align with the binary datasets these tools are trained on. This creates a "digital gatekeeper" that risks flagging or excluding our community members simply for existing as they are.

I urge you to consider the unintended consequences this legislation will have on the Twin Cities' diverse business landscape and the safety of our most vulnerable youth. We believe in a vibrant, inclusive Minnesota economy where everyone can participate safely, and HF 4138 threatens the commercial and digital safe spaces that the LGBTQ+ community fought to build.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Waggoner
Quorum, Minnesota's LGBTQ+ and Allied Chamber of Commerce