



The Florida House of Representatives

Paul Renner
Speaker

NEWS RELEASE

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Florida House Votes to Unplug Children from Addictive Social Media Platforms

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (*January 24, 2024*) — Today, the Florida House of Representatives voted to pass House Bill 1 to protect children from addictive social media platforms and the danger they pose to mental health.

House Bill 1, by Representatives Tyler Sirois (R-Merritt Island), Fiona McFarland (R-Sarasota), and Michele Rayner (D-St. Petersburg) protects Florida's children from addictive and harmful social media platforms by prohibiting those under the age of 16 from making a social media account and requiring social media platforms to employ commercially reasonable age verification methods. These platforms intentionally use design features, including addictive algorithms and infinite scrolling, to keep users hooked for excessive amounts of time. Overuse of social media has been shown to have a detrimental impact on children's mental health and well-being.

"We must address the harmful effects social media platforms have on the development and well-being of our kids," said Speaker Paul Renner (R-Palm Coast). "Florida has a compelling state interest and duty to protect our children, their mental health, and their childhood. I'm grateful to the members of this body for their decisive action to fight for our kids and their ability to thrive."

"You don't have to be a parent of a young person to understand the addictive nature of social media platforms," said Representative Sirois. "Even our children know social media is harming them, but due to addiction and peer pressure, they are unable to step away. It's been an honor to work with Speaker Renner and Representatives McFarland and Rayner to craft legislation that rescues our kids from the tight grip of these platforms."

"Social media platforms are addictive by design. Combine that with intense social pressures, bullying, and harassment, and it's no wonder our kids' mental health is declining. This bill puts an end to that,

because social media companies have not,” said Representative McFarland. “I have enjoyed working with Representatives Sirois and Rayner on this legislation and appreciate Speaker Renner’s vision and leadership.”

“In the state of Florida, we’re saying, ‘Enough is enough.’ We will not allow social media companies to build a business on the backs of our children,” said Representative Michele Rayner. “Protecting kids is not a partisan issue; I’m grateful Speaker Renner has prioritized this legislation and for the opportunity to collaborate with Representatives Sirois and McFarland.”

For more information on HB 1, visit www.myfloridahouse.gov.

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