



TO: Business, Commerce, and Insurance Committee
FROM: Marion Miner, Associate Director of Pro-Life & Family Policy
Nebraska Catholic Conference
DATE: February 3, 2025
Re: LB504 (Age-Appropriate Online Design Code Act) (Support)

The Nebraska Catholic Conference advocates for the public policy interests of the Catholic Church and advances the Gospel of Life through engaging, educating, and empowering public officials, Catholic laity, and the general public.

The Conference supports LB504, which would require that any entity providing an online service reasonably likely to be accessed by minors must exercise reasonable care and enact measures to protect those minors from harm.

The human person is fundamentally social and relational. Each of us is born into a world thick with relational ties that we need in order to fully develop. These relational ties—familial, cultural, social, and otherwise—protect, guide, and influence us our whole lives, but especially when we are young. They help us make sense of ourselves, of others, and of the world. The people with whom we have these ties teach us over time who we are and how to navigate the dangers, opportunities, and relationships of life with skill and attention.

The online world is a largely unregulated environment, artificially free of familiar social ties and guidance, but it is full of other actors. Some of these actors intend to cause harm. Others have jobs that consist of pulling people into traps of addiction and emotional dependency on their products. These products are, in many cases, built on the mirage of curated identity creation that is only possible in an online world but has consequences for a person's image of self and others that carry over into real life.

Nearly all of us, younger people especially, spend a great deal of time online. It is *formative*, for better or worse. Some of the time and the experiences a child or adolescent can gain online are tremendously helpful. But this environment also carries with it a very high risk of serious harm in the development of a person's sense of self and of relationship with others. LB504 is an important step toward limiting these influences on children and returning control to their parents, who are best equipped to help them navigate it.

We ask your support for LB504. Thank you for your time and consideration.