

April 3, 2023

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel
Chair, Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection
1021 O Street, Suite 5220
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 1394 (Wicks) Social Media Platform Liability for Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking - SUPPORT

Dear Chair Gabriel:

Common Sense supports AB 1394 (Wicks), which addresses the soaring rates of child sexual exploitation and child sex trafficking online by holding social media platforms accountable to survivors when platforms knowingly or negligently facilitate, aid, or abet child exploitation or trafficking.

[Social media companies are aware](#) that sexual abuse, exploitation, and trafficking of children are originating on their platforms, and with [kids spending more time on social media](#) – many of them on for nearly an hour and a half every day – they are increasingly vulnerable to these threats.

One quarter of 9- to 17-year-olds report having had a [sexually explicit interaction online](#) with someone they believed to be an adult. Since 2000, traffickers have recruited [55% of sex trafficking victims online](#), usually through social media. In 2021, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's CyberTipline received [29.3 million reports of suspected child sexual exploitation](#) (up 35% from 2020).

AB 1394 prohibits social media platforms from knowingly, recklessly, or negligently facilitating, aiding, or abetting commercial sexual exploitation of children. This includes platform designs, features, or affordances that the social media platform knows, or should know, cause child users to be victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Further, the bill requires platforms, when notified, to render images or videos of children permanently invisible, helping survivors to reduce fear of repeated victimization.

AB 1394 would amend existing law permitting survivors to sue those that trafficked or exploited them to include large social media platforms. It would also permit suits against platforms that refuse a child and/or guardian's demand to render their images and videos invisible.

Common Sense strongly supports policies and programs that build a safer digital ecosystem for kids and teens. For the above reasons, we respectfully request your “Aye” vote on AB 1394.

Sincerely,



Kami Peer
State Policy Associate, Common Sense Media