



February 15, 2022

Honorable Skyler Wheeler
Honorable Sandy Salmon
Honorable Beth Wessel-Kroeschell
Iowa House Judiciary Subcommittee

Re: Opposition to House File 2066

Dear Representatives Wheeler, Salmon and Wessel-Kroeschell:

On behalf of CTIA®, the trade association for the wireless communications industry, and its member companies in Iowa, I write to you in opposition to House File 2066, which would mandate state-specific content filtering requirements on tablets and smartphones. While well intentioned, HF 2066 is neither necessary nor practicable.

The wireless industry already offers products and services to consumers – many for free – on a nationwide basis. Setting state-specific requirements on devices would be unfeasible.

Manufacturers already have content filtering technologies and parental controls on devices that help adults and children make positive digital choices everywhere they browse. These easily accessible controls allow parents and guardians to restrict not only internet content, but also the types of applications that can be downloaded. Manufacturers also already offer functionalities for parental approval before apps can be downloaded and that allow parents to set usage limits on apps, websites, and internet content – allowing parents and guardians to make informed decisions about how their children use the internet and wireless devices. Moreover, wireless providers themselves offer additional services and tools that enable parents and guardians to determine the internet and app content their children can access.

The wireless industry has a longstanding commitment to provide parents and guardians with resources to help ensure a safe online experience for their children, and CTIA and its members have been at the forefront of educating parents and guardians about online safety. As part of this commitment, the wireless industry has created a wide range of resources to enable parents and guardians to choose the right digital experience for their family. For example, Growing Wireless (www.GrowingWireless.com) – a program the wireless industry together created – provides educational materials and industry-backed tools for the parents and guardians of connected children. It details parental control features, and offers guides and tips for safe mobile device usage. Instead of a government-mandated one-size-fits-all filtering requirement, the most effective approach to ensuring the digital safety of children is through parental empowerment and educational



collaboration – policymakers and all stakeholders working together to educate consumers about the tools that are available to them, especially in today’s ever-evolving world of technology.

By contrast, HF 2066 sets technically infeasible requirements as it is uncertain how its mandates would work in practice across applications and content – from books and movies to music and video – with respect to setting filters. Mandating Iowa-specific technical requirements on devices sold nationally is also unworkable. Operating systems and other functionalities are not designed on a state-by-state basis. This legislation would add significant complexity for businesses notwithstanding best efforts to comply, and would create additional confusion for consumers at the point of purchase. If enacted, HF 2066 could have the unintended consequence of inadvertently blocking important information or information wireless providers may be legally required not to block. For example, while the bill defines content that is harmful to minors, filtering software will not be so nuanced as to allow content that may contain useful or helpful information, including for adults who sign up for service but would automatically have filtering turned on.

HF 2066 could harm Iowans by driving away innovation and acting as a disincentive for investment and development. Wireless jobs and investment [continue to rise across America](#); today, the wireless industry supports over 4.7 million jobs and contributes roughly \$475 billion annually to the American economy. In Iowa, the wireless industry contributes \$3 billion to the state’s GDP with over 34,000 wireless-related jobs accounting for over \$1.4 billion in pay and benefits to Iowans. HF 2066 threatens to undo these incredible developments. Basic economics dictate that it would almost certainly not be cost-effective for major manufacturers to create one set of devices for 49 states, and a different set for Iowa alone.

The wireless industry takes the issue of child safety seriously by offering tools with the capability to block content and will continue to do so. CTIA and its members respectfully urge you not to move HF 2066.

Sincerely,

Lisa V. McCabe
Director, State Legislative Affairs

Parental Control Tools and Resources

PC Magazine Best Parental Control Software for 2022

<https://www.pcmag.com/picks/the-best-parental-control-software>

Common Sense Media, Parents Ultimate Guide to Parental Controls

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-parental-controls>

CTIA Growing Wireless

www.ctia.org/about-ctia/programs/growing-wireless

Amazon

<https://www.amazon.com/b?ie=UTF8&node=15282065011>

Apple

<https://www.apple.com/families/>

AT&T

<https://screenready.att.com/>

<https://www.att.com/security/secure-family-app/>

Google

<https://families.google.com/familylink/>

Microsoft

<https://account.microsoft.com/family/about>

<https://news.microsoft.com/en-in/features/windows-10-parental-controls-feature/>

Samsung

<https://www.samsung.com/us/support/answer/ANS00086102/>

T-Mobile

<https://www.t-mobile.com/offers/t-mobile-family-mode>

<https://www.t-mobile.com/support/plans-features/web-guard-device-content-filter>

Verizon

<https://www.verizon.com/support/verizon-smart-family/>