



September 18,, 2024

The Honorable Chris Tully
Chair
New Jersey Assembly Committee on Science, Innovation and Technology
State House
125 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08625

Re: Oppose AB 4664

Dear Chair Tully:

On behalf of Chamber of Progress – a tech industry association supporting public policies to build a more inclusive society in which all people benefit from technological advancements – I write to **oppose AB 4664**, which seeks to prohibit social media platforms from promoting practices or features that “could lead” to the development of eating disorders in youth.

While we share the bill’s goal to protect young people, we are concerned that the language as introduced may also restrict access to indispensable resources and support. In short, the bill might do the exact opposite of its intention, ultimately alienating New Jersey’s youth seeking quality health related digital content, community, and resources.

Ambiguity in definitions could lead to overmoderation of health-related content

AB 4664’s vague and overly broad language, including terms such as “reasonable care” and “diet products,” lack clear definitions, which could leave platforms unsure of how to comply and result in overmoderation of all health-related content. For example, posts promoting healthy eating habits, such as recipe sharing and nutritional information, could be removed due to this lack of clarity.

Moreover, the bill’s standard of “could cause” an eating disorder is highly ambiguous, making it challenging for platforms to predict or prevent harmful outcomes, prompting them to remove health or food-related content altogether. In short, the “reasonable care” standard may drive platforms to remove *all* eating disorder content, including the

supportive communities that young people turn to when seeking relief from their eating disorders.

Algorithmic restrictions may inadvertently remove supportive and benign content

AB 4664 prohibits a social media platform from using a “design, algorithm, practice, affordance, or feature” that could “cause child users to develop an eating disorder” including those related to “diet products.” Algorithms play a crucial role in filtering harmful material, curating beneficial content, and connecting users with valuable resources.

However, due to this bill’s vague definitions, banning certain algorithms would also restrict those that direct users toward supportive and benign information—such as fitness tips, nutritional advice, and mental health support. If platforms are forced to aggressively oversimplify or over-moderate their algorithms to avoid liability, they may inadvertently block access to these essential resources for struggling teens. In fact, online recovery communities provide lifesaving support for individuals with eating disorders by offering safe spaces for discussion and peer support.^{1,2}

Chamber of Progress agrees that protecting young people from harmful content is important. However, we have significant concerns that the broad language and vague restrictions in this bill as drafted could unintentionally restrict access to essential resources, including those for recovery. For these reasons, we respectfully ask you to **oppose AB 4664**. A better approach would be to increase support for educational and mental health resources to combat this urgent public health concern.

Sincerely,



Brianna January
Director of State & Local Government Relations, Northeast US

¹ Kendal, S., Kirk, S., Elvey, R., Catchpole, R., & Pryjmachuk, S. (2017). How a moderated online discussion forum facilitates support for young people with eating disorders. *Health expectations : an international journal of public participation in health care and health policy*, 20(1), 98–111.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.12439>

² Au, E. S., & Cosh, S. M. (2022). Social media and eating disorder recovery: An exploration of Instagram recovery community users and their reasons for engagement. *Eating behaviors*, 46, 101651.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eatbeh.2022.101651>