April 8, 2026

The Honorable Jacquelyn M. Baginski, Chairwoman
House Committee on Innovation, Internet, & Technology
House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

**LETTER OF OPPOSITION to H. 7350 – "ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE COMPANION MODELS"**

Dear Chair Baginski and Members of the Committee:

Tesla applauds your commitment to advancing user safety in artificial intelligence (AI) tools. As a leader in automotive AI innovation, Tesla has proactively embedded rigorous safeguards into its systems to prioritize safety. Your intent -- to protect users from risks posed by AI companions -- is critically important, and we share your dedication to responsible development of technology, especially AI. To achieve these goals, we respectfully urge the Committee to consider the following:

- Accountability should be focused on the developers of companion AI models who have direct control, access, and insight into those models; and
- Legislation should avoid unintentional consequences for non-developers of companion AI, including vehicle manufacturers.

Tesla manufactures electric vehicles equipped with cutting-edge autonomous driving technology. Our mission is to eliminate human error -- the root cause of over 90% of vehicle crashes -- through advanced AI systems. For example, our Full Self-Driving (FSD) Supervised system, a Level 2 advanced driver-assistance system, reduces crash rates by seven times compared to the U.S. average. These safety advancements rely on sophisticated AI systems that interpret complex environments in real time, enabling features like real-time object detection, predictive battery management, and driver monitoring. These tools are designed to enhance functional safety.

However, broad legislative efforts that impose obligations on entities integrating AI systems rather than the developers who create them risk overlooking the very risk the legislation seeks to mitigate from unsafe AI companion behaviors. When an AI companion or similar functionality is provided by a third-party, the vehicle manufacturer or operator has no ability to modify the underlying code, train the model, or access its decision-making logic. Requiring non-developers like Tesla to verify outputs, enforce safety protocols, or issue recurring disclosures is not just impossible in most instances, but it also misdirects accountability.

For example, if a third-party chatbot is embedded in a vehicle's infotainment system, the developer of that chatbot (not Tesla) maintains the ability to shape its responses, filter harmful content, or ensure compliance with safety requirements. To effectively safeguard users, policies must target the entities that control these systems -- the developers. Regulating end-use applications in vehicles would not address the

root risks the legislation seeks to mitigate. Instead, holding developers accountable ensures systemic safety improvements at the source.

Rhode Island has an opportunity to lead with smart, targeted policy by focusing liability on developers of foundational AI models, narrowing the bill's scope to avoid unintended consequences, and preserving flexibility for innovation in safety-critical applications. Thank you for your consideration.

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