

April 8, 2026

Chair Jacquelyn M. Baginski
House Innovation and Technology
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Testimony in Support of HB7953 – Rhode Island Social Media Regulation Act

Dear Chair Baginski and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the 80,000 union members of the Rhode Island AFL-CIO and our affiliated local unions, I write in support of House Bill 7953, introduced by Representative Spears. This legislation sets reasonable limitations on access to social media for minors.

As a labor movement, we advocate for the full well-being of workers. This includes both on the job and at home, because our members are not just workers; they are parents, caregivers, and community members. Policies that impact the health and safety of children directly affect the families we represent.

The risks associated with social media use among minors are increasingly well-documented, particularly with respect to mental health outcomes. Our members encounter these impacts firsthand in multiple capacities. As parents, they are navigating the challenges of raising children in a digital environment that is constant and difficult to monitor. As educators, they are witnessing the effects of social media in the classroom, including increased distraction, bullying, and diminished focus. As healthcare workers, they are treating young people experiencing anxiety, depression, and crisis at rising rates.

This legislation offers a reasonable extension of long-standing public policy principles. Rhode Island has a history of establishing protections in environments that pose risks to children. Social media platforms, designed to maximize engagement and influence behavior, should be subject to similar safeguards.

Importantly, this bill places responsibility not only on families, but also on the platforms themselves by requiring meaningful parental consent mechanisms. This shared responsibility is critical to ensuring that protections are effective and enforceable. For these reasons the Rhode Island AFL-CIO respectfully urges your support of House Bill 7953.

Respectfully submitted,



Erica A. Hammond
Legislative Director, Rhode Island AFL-CIO