

April 7, 2026

RE: Opposition to H7953 and impacts on LGBTQ+ young people

Dear Chair Baginski and members of the Innovation, Internet, and Technology Committee,

The Trevor Project writes to express our opposition to H7953, which would prohibit young people under 18 from creating or maintaining a social media account, regardless of the nature or design of the platform. We urge you to oppose H7953 in its current form, which will prevent LGBTQ+ young people from accessing life-saving online support systems.

The Trevor Project is the leading suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for LGBTQ+ young people. Trevor offers 24/7 crisis services, connecting highly trained counselors with LGBTQ+ young people whenever they need support. To drive prevention efforts, The Trevor Project also operates robust research, advocacy, education, and peer support programs. Finally, to support our mission of ending LGBTQ+ youth suicide, we have created TrevorSpace, the world's largest safe space social networking site designed specifically for LGBTQ+ young people ages 13-24. TrevorSpace is a moderated online community that provides a welcoming environment for young people to explore their identities, find peer support, and make friends.

We know from research – and from what LGBTQ+ young people tell our trained counselors at Trevor – that social media has the potential to cause harm. Social media can contribute to negative outcomes such as bullying, anxiety, depression, and eating disorders, and it's important that these issues are addressed through proactive measures. We applaud the intent behind H7953 to protect young people from the harms of social media.

However, we cannot ignore the reality that many LGBTQ+ young people – especially those who do not live in supportive homes or communities – turn to the internet to better understand themselves, and to find support and belonging. These online spaces can be life-saving; **LGBTQ+ young people with access to affirming online spaces report significantly lower odds of attempting suicide.** Properly designed and moderated, platforms like TrevorSpace have demonstrated the ability to bring youth together, connect them to the support they need, and even positively impact their mental health and well-being.

While H7953 aims to protect the mental health of young people, the blunt requirement to bar all young people under 18 from creating or maintaining social media accounts, regardless of the nature of the platform or safety of its design, does not take into account that different young people have different needs, and will especially cause unintended harm for LGBTQ+ young people who are at the highest risk.

As the legislature considers legislation intended to make social media safer for young people, we hope you will take these unique experiences of LGBTQ+ young people into account and reject provisions that would strip them of life-saving online support systems. The relationship between social media and youth mental health is nuanced, and the solutions should be too, leaning into empowering social media users and their families to make their own decisions and to control their experiences online.

Given our hands' on experience with these topics, we are more than happy to help explore solutions that achieve our shared goal of a safer, more accepting online environment for all youth. Please do not hesitate to reach me at casey.pick@thetrevorproject.org to discuss this topic further.

Sincerely,



Casey Pick
Senior Director of Law & Policy
The Trevor Project