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SENATE BILL NO. 1515

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the Governor
on March 27, 2023)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Stanley)

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 18.2-390, 59.1-575, 59.1-576, and 59.1-578 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding sections numbered 8.01-40.5 and 59.1-577.1, relating to civil liability for publishing or distribution of material harmful to minors on the Internet; Consumer Data Protection Act.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 18.2-390, 59.1-575, 59.1-576, and 59.1-578 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding sections numbered 8.01-40.5 and 59.1-577.1 as follows:

§ 8.01-40.5. *Publishing or distributing material harmful to minors on the Internet.*

A. For the purposes of this section:

"Interactive computer service" means the same as that term is defined in § 8.01-49.1.

"Material harmful to minors" means any description or representation of nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sadomasochistic abuse when it (i) appeals to the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of minors; (ii) is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable material for minors; and (iii) is, when taken as a whole, lacking in serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.

"Minor" means the same as "child" as that term is defined in § 59.1-575.

"Sexual conduct" means the same as that term is defined in § 18.2-390.

"Substantial portion" means more than 33 and one-third percent of total material on a website that meets the definition of material harmful to minors.

B. Any commercial entity that knowingly or intentionally publishes or distributes material harmful to minors on the Internet from a website that contains a substantial portion of such material shall, through the use of (i) a commercially available database that is regularly used by businesses or governmental entities for the purpose of age and identity verification or (ii) another commercially reasonable method of age and identity verification, verify that any person attempting to access such material harmful to minors is 18 years of age or older.

C. Any commercial entity that violates the provisions of this section shall be subject to civil liability for damages resulting from a minor's access to such material harmful to a minor and reasonable attorney fees and costs.

D. Nothing in this section shall be construed to impose an obligation or liability on a provider or user of an interactive computer service on the Internet.

§ 18.2-390. Definitions.

As used in this article:

(1) "Juvenile" means a person less than 18 years of age.

(2) "Nudity" means a state of undress so as to expose the human male or female genitals, pubic area or buttocks with less than a full opaque covering, or the showing of the female breast with less than a fully opaque covering of any portion thereof below the top of the nipple, or the depiction of covered or uncovered male genitals in a discernibly turgid state.

(3) "Sexual conduct" means actual or explicitly simulated acts of masturbation, ~~homosexuality~~, sexual intercourse, or physical contact in an act of apparent sexual stimulation or gratification with a person's clothed or unclothed genitals, pubic area, buttocks, or, if such be female, breast.

(4) "Sexual excitement" means the condition of human male or female genitals when in a state of sexual stimulation or arousal.

(5) "Sadomasochistic abuse" means actual or explicitly simulated flagellation or torture by or upon a person who is nude or clad in undergarments, a mask or bizarre costume, or the condition of being fettered, bound or otherwise physically restrained on the part of one so clothed.

(6) "Harmful to juveniles" means that quality of any description or representation, in whatever form, of nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or sadomasochistic abuse, when it (a) predominantly appeals to the prurient, shameful or morbid interest of juveniles, (b) is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable material for juveniles, and (c) is, when taken as a whole, lacking in serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value for juveniles.

(7) "Knowingly" means having general knowledge of, or reason to know, or a belief or ground for belief which warrants further inspection or inquiry of both (a) the character and content of any material

described herein which is reasonably susceptible of examination by the defendant, and (b) the age of the juvenile, provided however, that an honest mistake shall constitute an excuse from liability hereunder if the defendant made a reasonable bona fide attempt to ascertain the true age of such juvenile.

(8) "Video or computer game" means an object or device that stores recorded data or instructions, receives data or instructions generated by a person who uses it, and, by processing the data or instructions, creates an interactive game capable of being played, viewed, or experienced on or through a computer, television gaming system, console, or other technology.

§ 59.1-575. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Affiliate" means a legal entity that controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with another legal entity or shares common branding with another legal entity. For the purposes of this definition, "control" or "controlled" means (i) ownership of, or the power to vote, more than 50 percent of the outstanding shares of any class of voting security of a company; (ii) control in any manner over the election of a majority of the directors or of individuals exercising similar functions; or (iii) the power to exercise controlling influence over the management of a company.

"Authenticate" means verifying through reasonable means that the consumer, entitled to exercise his consumer rights in § 59.1-577, is the same consumer exercising such consumer rights with respect to the personal data at issue.

"Biometric data" means data generated by automatic measurements of an individual's biological characteristics, such as a fingerprint, voiceprint, eye retinas, irises, or other unique biological patterns or characteristics that is used to identify a specific individual. "Biometric data" does not include a physical or digital photograph, a video or audio recording or data generated therefrom, or information collected, used, or stored for health care treatment, payment, or operations under HIPAA.

"Business associate" means the same meaning as the term established by HIPAA.

"Child" means any natural person younger than 18 years of age.

"Consent" means a clear affirmative act signifying a consumer's freely given, specific, informed, and unambiguous agreement to process personal data relating to the consumer. Consent may include a written statement, including a statement written by electronic means, or any other unambiguous affirmative action.

"Consumer" means a natural person who is a resident of the Commonwealth acting only in an individual or household context. It does not include a natural person acting in a commercial or employment context.

"Controller" means the natural or legal person that, alone or jointly with others, determines the purpose and means of processing personal data.

"Covered entity" means the same as the term is established by HIPAA.

"Decisions that produce legal or similarly significant effects concerning a consumer" means a decision made by the controller that results in the provision or denial by the controller of financial and lending services, housing, insurance, education enrollment, criminal justice, employment opportunities, health care services, or access to basic necessities, such as food and water.

"De-identified data" means data that cannot reasonably be linked to an identified or identifiable natural person, or a device linked to such person. A controller that possesses "de-identified data" shall comply with the requirements of subsection A of § 59.1-581.

"Health record" means the same as that term is defined in § 32.1-127.1:03.

"Health care provider" means the same as that term is defined in § 32.1-276.3.

"HIPAA" means the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (42 U.S.C. § 1320d et seq.).

"Identified or identifiable natural person" means a person who can be readily identified, directly or indirectly.

"Institution of higher education" means a public institution and private institution of higher education, as those terms are defined in § 23.1-100.

"Nonprofit organization" means any corporation organized under the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act (§ 13.1-801 et seq.) or any organization exempt from taxation under § 501(c)(3), 501(c)(6), or 501(c)(12) of the Internal Revenue Code, any political organization, any organization exempt from taxation under § 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that is identified in § 52-41, and any subsidiary or affiliate of entities organized pursuant to Chapter 9.1 (§ 56-231.15 et seq.) of Title 56.

"Parent or guardian" means the same as that term is defined in § 59.1-519.

"Personal data" means any information that is linked or reasonably linkable to an identified or identifiable natural person. "Personal data" does not include de-identified data or publicly available information.

"Political organization" means a party, committee, association, fund, or other organization, whether or not incorporated, organized and operated primarily for the purpose of influencing or attempting to influence the selection, nomination, election, or appointment of any individual to any federal, state, or

local public office or office in a political organization or the election of a presidential/vice-presidential elector, whether or not such individual or elector is selected, nominated, elected, or appointed.

"Precise geolocation data" means information derived from technology, including but not limited to global positioning system level latitude and longitude coordinates or other mechanisms, that directly identifies the specific location of a natural person with precision and accuracy within a radius of 1,750 feet. "Precise geolocation data" does not include the content of communications or any data generated by or connected to advanced utility metering infrastructure systems or equipment for use by a utility.

"Process" or "processing" means any operation or set of operations performed, whether by manual or automated means, on personal data or on sets of personal data, such as the collection, use, storage, disclosure, analysis, deletion, or modification of personal data.

"Processor" means a natural or legal entity that processes personal data on behalf of a controller.

"Profiling" means any form of automated processing performed on personal data to evaluate, analyze, or predict personal aspects related to an identified or identifiable natural person's economic situation, health, personal preferences, interests, reliability, behavior, location, or movements.

"Protected health information" means the same as the term is established by HIPAA.

"Pseudonymous data" means personal data that cannot be attributed to a specific natural person without the use of additional information, provided that such additional information is kept separately and is subject to appropriate technical and organizational measures to ensure that the personal data is not attributed to an identified or identifiable natural person.

"Publicly available information" means information that is lawfully made available through federal, state, or local government records, or information that a business has a reasonable basis to believe is lawfully made available to the general public through widely distributed media, by the consumer, or by a person to whom the consumer has disclosed the information, unless the consumer has restricted the information to a specific audience.

"Sale of personal data" means the exchange of personal data for monetary consideration by the controller to a third party. "Sale of personal data" does not include:

1. The disclosure of personal data to a processor that processes the personal data on behalf of the controller;

2. The disclosure of personal data to a third party for purposes of providing a product or service requested by the consumer;

3. The disclosure or transfer of personal data to an affiliate of the controller;

4. The disclosure of information that the consumer (i) intentionally made available to the general public via a channel of mass media and (ii) did not restrict to a specific audience; or

5. The disclosure or transfer of personal data to a third party as an asset that is part of a merger, acquisition, bankruptcy, or other transaction in which the third party assumes control of all or part of the controller's assets.

"Sensitive data" means a category of personal data that includes:

1. Personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, religious beliefs, mental or physical health diagnosis, sexual orientation, or citizenship or immigration status;

2. The processing of genetic or biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person;

3. The personal data collected from a known child; or

4. Precise geolocation data.

"State agency" means the same as that term is defined in § 2.2-307.

"Targeted advertising" means displaying advertisements to a consumer where the advertisement is selected based on personal data obtained from that consumer's activities over time and across nonaffiliated websites or online applications to predict such consumer's preferences or interests.

"Targeted advertising" does not include:

1. Advertisements based on activities within a controller's own websites or online applications;

2. Advertisements based on the context of a consumer's current search query, visit to a website, or online application;

3. Advertisements directed to a consumer in response to the consumer's request for information or feedback; or

4. Processing personal data processed solely for measuring or reporting advertising performance, reach, or frequency.

"Third party" means a natural or legal person, public authority, agency, or body other than the consumer, controller, processor, or an affiliate of the processor or the controller.

"Verifiable parental consent" means authorization by a parent or guardian for a controller or processor to register the child of such parent or guardian with such controller's or processor's product or service.

§ 59.1-576. Scope; exemptions.

183 A. This chapter applies to persons that conduct business in the Commonwealth or produce products
184 or services that are targeted to residents of the Commonwealth and that (i) during a calendar year,
185 control or process personal data of at least 100,000 consumers or (ii) control or process personal data of
186 at least 25,000 consumers and derive over 50 percent of gross revenue from the sale of personal data.

187 B. This chapter shall not apply to any (i) body, authority, board, bureau, commission, district, or
188 agency of the Commonwealth or of any political subdivision of the Commonwealth; (ii) financial
189 institution or data subject to Title V of the federal Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (15 U.S.C. § 6801 et seq.);
190 (iii) covered entity or business associate governed by the privacy, security, and breach notification rules
191 issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 45 C.F.R. Parts 160 and 164 established
192 pursuant to HIPAA, and the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (P.L.
193 111-5); (iv) nonprofit organization; or (v) institution of higher education.

194 C. The following information and data is exempt from this chapter:

195 1. Protected health information under HIPAA;

196 2. Health records for purposes of Title 32.1;

197 3. Patient identifying information for purposes of 42 U.S.C. § 290dd-2;

198 4. Identifiable private information for purposes of the federal policy for the protection of human
199 subjects under 45 C.F.R. Part 46; identifiable private information that is otherwise information collected
200 as part of human subjects research pursuant to the good clinical practice guidelines issued by The
201 International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use;
202 the protection of human subjects under 21 C.F.R. Parts 6, 50, and 56, or personal data used or shared in
203 research conducted in accordance with the requirements set forth in this chapter, or other research
204 conducted in accordance with applicable law;

205 5. Information and documents created for purposes of the federal Health Care Quality Improvement
206 Act of 1986 (42 U.S.C. § 11101 et seq.);

207 6. Patient safety work product for purposes of the federal Patient Safety and Quality Improvement
208 Act (42 U.S.C. § 299b-21 et seq.);

209 7. Information derived from any of the health care-related information listed in this subsection that is
210 de-identified in accordance with the requirements for de-identification pursuant to HIPAA;

211 8. Information originating from, and intermingled to be indistinguishable with, or information treated
212 in the same manner as information exempt under this subsection that is maintained by a covered entity
213 or business associate as defined by HIPAA or a program or a qualified service organization as defined
214 by 42 U.S.C. § 290dd-2;

215 9. Information used only for public health activities and purposes as authorized by HIPAA;

216 10. The collection, maintenance, disclosure, sale, communication, or use of any personal information
217 bearing on a consumer's credit worthiness, credit standing, credit capacity, character, general reputation,
218 personal characteristics, or mode of living by a consumer reporting agency or furnisher that provides
219 information for use in a consumer report, and by a user of a consumer report, but only to the extent that
220 such activity is regulated by and authorized under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C.
221 § 1681 et seq.);

222 11. Personal data collected, processed, sold, or disclosed in compliance with the federal Driver's
223 Privacy Protection Act of 1994 (18 U.S.C. § 2721 et seq.);

224 12. Personal data regulated by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C.
225 § 1232g et seq.);

226 13. Personal data collected, processed, sold, or disclosed in compliance with the federal Farm Credit
227 Act (12 U.S.C. § 2001 et seq.); and

228 14. Data processed or maintained (i) in the course of an individual applying to, employed by, or
229 acting as an agent or independent contractor of a controller, processor, or third party, to the extent that
230 the data is collected and used within the context of that role; (ii) as the emergency contact information
231 of an individual under this chapter used for emergency contact purposes; or (iii) that is necessary to
232 retain to administer benefits for another individual relating to the individual under clause (i) and used
233 for the purposes of administering those benefits.

234 D. Controllers and processors that comply with the verifiable parental consent requirements of the
235 Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (15 U.S.C. § 6501 et seq.) shall be deemed compliant with any
236 obligation to obtain parental consent under this chapter.

237 **§ 59.1-577.1. Controller and processor responsibilities; verifiable parental consent.**

238 A. A controller or processor shall obtain verifiable parental consent prior to registering any child
239 with the controller's or processor's product or service, or before collecting, using, or disclosing such
240 child's personal data that has been verified by such child's parent or guardian. A controller or
241 processor shall provide the parent or guardian the option to consent to the collection and use of such
242 child's personal data without consenting to the disclosure of such child's personal data to third parties.

243 B. A controller or processor shall make reasonable efforts to obtain verifiable parental consent by
244 taking into consideration available technology to ensure that the person providing such consent is the

child's parent or guardian. Verifiable parental consent may be obtained from the parent or guardian by:

1. Providing a signed consent form to the controller or processor;
2. Using a credit card, debit card, or other online payment system that provides notification of any transaction with the controller or processor to the primary account holder; or
3. Providing a form of government-issued identification to the controller or processor.

§ 59.1-578. Data controller responsibilities; transparency.

A. A controller shall:

1. Limit the collection of personal data to what is adequate, relevant, and reasonably necessary in relation to the purposes for which such data is processed, as disclosed to the consumer;

2. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, not process personal data for purposes that are neither reasonably necessary to nor compatible with the disclosed purposes for which such personal data is processed, as disclosed to the consumer, unless the controller obtains the consumer's consent;

3. Establish, implement, and maintain reasonable administrative, technical, and physical data security practices to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and accessibility of personal data. Such data security practices shall be appropriate to the volume and nature of the personal data at issue;

4. Not process personal data in violation of state and federal laws that prohibit unlawful discrimination against consumers. A controller shall not discriminate against a consumer for exercising any of the consumer rights contained in this chapter, including denying goods or services, charging different prices or rates for goods or services, or providing a different level of quality of goods and services to the consumer. However, nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to require a controller to provide a product or service that requires the personal data of a consumer that the controller does not collect or maintain or to prohibit a controller from offering a different price, rate, level, quality, or selection of goods or services to a consumer, including offering goods or services for no fee, if the consumer has exercised his right to opt out pursuant to § 59.1-577 or the offer is related to a consumer's voluntary participation in a bona fide loyalty, rewards, premium features, discounts, or club card program; and

5. Not process sensitive data concerning a consumer without obtaining the consumer's consent, or, in the case of the processing of sensitive data concerning a known child, without processing such data in accordance with the federal Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (15 U.S.C. § 6501 et seq.); and

6. Not knowingly process personal data of a child for the purposes of (i) targeted advertising, (ii) the sale of such personal data, or (iii) profiling in furtherance of decisions that produce legal or similarly significant effects concerning a consumer.

B. Any provision of a contract or agreement of any kind that purports to waive or limit in any way consumer rights pursuant to § 59.1-577 shall be deemed contrary to public policy and shall be void and unenforceable.

C. Controllers shall provide consumers with a reasonably accessible, clear, and meaningful privacy notice that includes:

1. The categories of personal data processed by the controller;
2. The purpose for processing personal data;
3. How consumers may exercise their consumer rights pursuant § 59.1-577, including how a consumer may appeal a controller's decision with regard to the consumer's request;
4. The categories of personal data that the controller shares with third parties, if any; and
5. The categories of third parties, if any, with whom the controller shares personal data.

D. If a controller sells personal data to third parties or processes personal data for targeted advertising, the controller shall clearly and conspicuously disclose such processing, as well as the manner in which a consumer may exercise the right to opt out of such processing.

E. A controller shall establish, and shall describe in a privacy notice, one or more secure and reliable means for consumers to submit a request to exercise their consumer rights under this chapter. Such means shall take into account the ways in which consumers normally interact with the controller, the need for secure and reliable communication of such requests, and the ability of the controller to authenticate the identity of the consumer making the request. Controllers shall not require a consumer to create a new account in order to exercise consumer rights pursuant to § 59.1-577 but may require a consumer to use an existing account.