

Assemblymember Chris Holden
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Holden,

I write to urge you and your colleagues on the Assembly Appropriations Committee to pass Assembly Bill 2273, the California Age Appropriate Design Code Act.

Last year, I disclosed more than 20,000 pages of internal documents from my former employer, Facebook (now Meta), to the U.S. Congress and Securities and Exchange Commission.

Probably the most shocking revelation in my disclosures revealed the extent to which Facebook knew its products, in particular Instagram, were harming our children and chose to do nothing about it. Instagram's own studies show that the platform [makes body images worse](#) for 1 in 3 teen girls. More than 13% of teen girls say the app makes their suicidal or self harm thoughts worse.

The products children spend so much time with from the youngest of ages are not safe by design. The question is: How do we collectively as society fix these problems?

I have worked inside Facebook, Google, and Pinterest and other tech companies, and the truth is we will never regulate at the pace by which tech companies innovate. Instead of trying to regulate the latest algorithmic innovation or clamp down on free speech, we should require safety standards in the design of the products.

AB 2273 turns off features like location tracking and doesn't allow the sale of kids data. It has been passed in the United Kingdom, so we know the tech industry already knows how to do this – they are just choosing not to for American kids.

This isn't about banning social media for our kids. Social media that promotes the best in humanity and allows our kids to connect with one another, learn, and thrive *is possible*.

California is the birthplace of many of these technologies, and it is California that has the opportunity to lead in designing systems that honor our freedom of speech, respect our children's privacy, and enshrine their rights to be safe online.

Regards,
Frances Haugen

cc: Assemblymember Buffy Wicks
Assemblymember Jordan Cunningham
Members of the Assembly Appropriations Committee
Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon