2026 -- H 7746

S T A T E   O F   R H O D E   I S L A N D

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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A N   A C T

RELATING TO COMMERCIAL LAW -- GENERAL REGULATORY PROVISIONS -- RHODE ISLAND CHILDREN'S ONLINE SAFETY ACT

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1   SECTION 1. Title 6 of the General Laws entitled "COMMERCIAL LAW — GENERAL

2   REGULATORY PROVISIONS" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3   CHAPTER 48.2

4   RHODE ISLAND CHILDREN'S ONLINE SAFETY ACT

5   **6-48.2-1. Short title.**

6   This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Rhode Island Children's Online

7   Safety Act."

8   **6-48.2-2. Definitions.**

9   As used in this chapter:

10   (1) "Connected" means that a covered minor and/or the covered minor's parent or legal

11   guardian has previously approved a connection with another user authorizing or permitting the

12   other user to privately contact the covered minor.

13   (2) "Covered minor" means any user who is determined by an operator, through one or

14   more commercially reasonable age-verification methods, to be under eighteen (18) years of age.

15   (3) "Financial transaction" means a transaction between users involving any form of

16   currency, including virtual currency used within a covered platform, whether or not the currency

17   may be converted to fiat currency.

18   (4) "Operator" means any person, business, corporation, partnership, association, or other

1 legal entity that operates or provides a covered platform.

2 (5) "Parent" means a parent or legal guardian.

3 (6) "Covered platform" means a public or semi-public website, online service, online

4 application, or mobile application that is used by a covered minor in this state and that allows users

5 to create profiles, post content viewable by other users, and socially interact with other users as a

6 significant part of the platform's functionality.

7 (7) "Tag" means identifying a second user in posted content in a manner that links to that

8 user's profile.

9 (8) "User" means an individual who uses a covered platform and is not acting as an operator

10 or as an agent of an operator.

11 **6-48.2-3. Privacy by default for covered minors.**

12 (a) No operator shall offer a covered platform in this state without implementing

13 commercially reasonable age-verification measures to determine whether a user is a covered minor.

14 (b) The attorney general shall promulgate regulations identifying commercially reasonable

15 and technically feasible age-verification methods, taking into consideration:

16 (1) The size and resources of the operator;

17 (2) The nature and audience of the covered platform; and

18 (3) Prevailing industry standards.

19 (c) For any user determined to be a covered minor, an operator shall, by default, ensure

20 that users who are not connected to the covered minor may not:

21 (1) Communicate directly with the covered minor;

22 (2) View the covered minor's profile;

23 (3) Tag the covered minor in posted content; or

24 (4) Engage in a financial transaction with the covered minor.

25 (d) A parent of a covered minor may override the default settings provided in subsection

26 (c) of this section.

27 (e) An operator shall notify the parent of a covered minor whenever the minor attempts to

28 modify the default settings, and the parent shall approve or deny the request.

29 **6-48.2-4. Parental approvals.**

30 (a) For covered minors under thirteen (13) years of age, an operator shall require parental

31 approval for all new connections.

32 (b) Operators shall provide parents with a readily accessible mechanism to view all

33 connections associated with a covered minor's account.

34 (c) For all covered minors, parental approval shall be required for all financial transactions,

1 and parents shall have access to a transaction history at all times.

2 **6-48.2-5. Prohibition on dark patterns.**

3 It shall be unlawful for an operator to deploy any user interface, design, or mechanism that

4 intentionally subverts or impairs the rights or protections afforded to covered minors or their

5 parents under this chapter.

6 **6-48.2-6. Nondiscrimination.**

7 An operator shall not withhold, degrade, increase the cost of, or otherwise discriminate

8 against a user for purposes of compliance with this chapter.

9 **6-48.2-7. Scope.**

10 (a) This chapter applies to conduct occurring wholly or partly within the State of Rhode

11 Island.

12 (b) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to impose liability inconsistent with 15 U.S.C.

13 § 6502 and regulations promulgated pursuant to 5 USC § 553.

14 **6-48.2-8. Rulemaking authority.**

15 The attorney general is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to

16 implement and enforce this chapter.

17 **6-48.2-9. Enforcement and remedies.**

18 (a) The attorney general may bring an action in the name of the state to enforce this chapter.

19 (b) Remedies shall include injunctive relief, restitution, disgorgement, civil penalties not

20 exceeding five thousand dollars ($5,000) per violation, and any other relief deemed appropriate by

21 the court.

22 (c) The attorney general shall maintain a website to receive complaints, information, and/or

23 referrals from members of the public concerning an operator's or covered platforms alleged

24 compliance or noncompliance with the provisions of this chapter.

25 **6-48.2-10. Severability.**

26 If any provision of this chapter or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity

27 shall not affect other provisions or applications of the chapter.

28 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

EXPLANATION

BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

OF

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RELATING TO COMMERCIAL LAW -- GENERAL REGULATORY PROVISIONS --
RHODE ISLAND CHILDREN'S ONLINE SAFETY ACT

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1   This act would provide protections to children using online platforms by requiring

2   platforms to turn off open chats by default for young users, and requires parent to approve children's

3   financial transactions on gaming and social media sites.

4   This act would take effect upon passage.

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