20.09.2019

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary

This submission is to convey my support of the implementation of Age Verification (AV) in Australia - as it is clear that porn is harming our children

44% of children between 9 and 16 are reporting that they have encountered sexual images online - and this is unacceptable

AV places responsibility on the suppliers of pornography to verify the age of consumers using their sites. AV occurs through utilising a third-party trusted verification process that accesses existing robust data sources (credit card, driver's licence, etc.). AV companies do not hold the data - they request verification from existing sources to ascertain the age of the person requesting to be verified. Most importantly, porn websites do not have access to the data

I support AV for both online wagering and online pornography. I believe:

a) AV has massive potential as a mechanism for protecting minors online

b) AV has potential benefits of further online age verification requirements, including to protect children from potential harm, and business and non-government organisations from reputation, operational and legal risks

There are also potential risks and unintended consequences in further restricting age verification requirements, including, but not limited to:

a) pushing adult consumers into unregulated/illegal environments or to other legal forms of these activities;
b) privacy breaches;
c) providing false assurance to parents and carers; and
d) freedom of expression;

Any and all barriers to this going forward can and must be overcome.

Thank you and regards,

Megan Knight