**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE PUBLIC HEALTH HAZARD OF PORNOGRAPHY WHICH LEADS TO A BROAD SPECTRUM OF INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETAL HARMS, TO EXPRESS THE NEED TO ADDRESS THE PORNOGRAPHY EPIDEMIC BY ENCOURAGING EDUCATION, PREVENTION, RESEARCH, AND POLICY CHANGES TO ADDRESS THE PROLIFERATION OF PORNOGRAPHY ON THE INTERNET IN PARTICULAR, AND TO CALL FOR REGULATION OF PORNOGRAPHY ON THE INTERNET TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH OBSCENITY LAWS OF THE STATE.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly recognize that pornography is creating a public health crisis and that it perpetuates a sexually toxic environment; and

Whereas, efforts to prevent pornography exposure and addiction, to educate individuals and families concerning its harmful effects, and to develop recovery programs must be addressed systemically in a manner that holds providers accountable; and

Whereas, pornography contributes to the hyper‑sexualization of teens and even prepubescent children in our society; and

Whereas, due to advances in technology and the universal availability of the internet, young children are exposed to what used to be referred to as hardcore pornography but is now considered mainstream pornography; and

Whereas, the average age of exposure to pornography is now eleven to twelve years; and

Whereas, this early exposure may lead to low self‑esteem and body‑image disorders, an increase in problematic sexual activity at younger ages, and an increased desire among adolescents to engage in risky sexual behavior; and

Whereas, exposure to pornography often serves as sex education for children and youth and informs their sexual templates; and

Whereas, pornography which depicts violence and abuse of women and children tends to normalize such behavior; and

Whereas, pornography treats women and children as objects and often portrays rape and abuse as if such acts are harmless; and

Whereas, pornography equates violence towards women and children with sex, and pain with pleasure, which increases the demand for sex trafficking, prostitution, child sexual abuse images, and child pornography; and

Whereas, potential detrimental effects on users of pornography can impact brain development and functioning, contribute to emotional and medical illnesses, shape deviant sexual arousal, and lead to difficulty in forming or maintaining positive, intimate relationships, as well as promote problematic or harmful sexual behaviors and addiction; and

Whereas, recent neurological research indicates that pornography is potentially biologically addictive, which means the user requires more novelty, often in the form of more shocking material, in order to be satisfied; and

Whereas, this biological addiction leads to increasing themes of risky sexual behaviors, extreme degradation, violence and child sexual abuse images, and child pornography; and

Whereas, pornography use is linked to lessening desire in young men to marry, dissatisfaction in marriage, and infidelity and this link demonstrates that pornography has a detrimental effect on the family unit; and

Whereas, overcoming the emotionally and psychologically damaging effects of pornography is beyond the capability of the afflicted individuals to address alone; and

Whereas, it is important to recognize the cancer on society that pornography poses when it is distributed carelessly over the internet with little regard for the devastating and long‑lasting effects that exposure to it can cause, and begin to address the regulation of it to ensure compliance with the state’s obscenity laws to protect the state’s citizens and youth in particular from such exposure. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina, by this resolution, recognize and acknowledge the public health hazard of pornography which leads to a broad spectrum of individual and societal harms, express the need to address the pornography epidemic by encouraging education, prevention, research, and policy changes to address the proliferation of pornography on the internet in particular, and call for regulation of pornography on the internet to ensure compliance with obscenity laws of the State.

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