

**SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
NINETIETH SESSION**

S.F. No. 1605

(SENATE AUTHORS: **BENSON and Hoffman**)

DATE
03/01/2017

D-PG
922

OFFICIAL STATUS
Introduction and first reading
Referred to Judiciary and Public Safety Finance and Policy

1.1 A resolution

1.2 recognizing pornography as a public health hazard leading to a broad spectrum of

1.3 individual and public health impacts and societal harms and memorializing Congress

1.4 to recognize this hazard and address pornography at a national level.

1.5 WHEREAS, pornography is creating a public health crisis; and

1.6 WHEREAS, pornography perpetuates a sexually toxic environment; and

1.7 WHEREAS, efforts to prevent pornography exposure and addiction, to educate individuals

1.8 and families concerning its harms, and to develop recovery programs must be addressed systemically

1.9 in ways that address root causes of the harm; and

1.10 WHEREAS, pornography is contributing to the hypersexualization of children and youth in

1.11 our society; and

1.12 WHEREAS, owing to advances in technology and the universal availability of the Internet,

1.13 young children are exposed to what used to be referred to as hardcore, but is now considered

1.14 mainstream, pornography at an alarming rate; and

1.15 WHEREAS, the average age of exposure to pornography is now 11 to 12 years of age; and

1.16 WHEREAS, this early exposure is leading to low self-esteem and body image disorders, an

1.17 increase in problematic sexual activity at younger ages, and an increased desire among children

1.18 and youth to engage in harmful sexual behavior; and

1.19 WHEREAS, due to limited access to accurate information about healthy relationships,

1.20 exposure to pornography too often serves as children's and youths' sex education and shapes their

1.21 sexual templates; and

1.22 WHEREAS, because pornography treats people as objects and commodities for the viewer's

1.23 use, it teaches girls that they are to be used and teaches boys to be users; and

1.24 WHEREAS, pornography normalizes violence and abuse; and

2.1 WHEREAS, pornography treats people as objects and often depicts rape and abuse as if such
2.2 acts are harmless; and

2.3 WHEREAS, pornography equates violent acts with sex and increases the demand for sex
2.4 trafficking, prostitution, images of child sexual abuse, and child pornography; and

2.5 WHEREAS, use of pornography can negatively affect brain development and functioning,
2.6 contribute to emotional and medical illnesses, shape deviant sexual arousal, and lead to difficulty
2.7 in forming or maintaining intimate relationships, as well as problematic or harmful sexual behaviors
2.8 and addiction; and

2.9 WHEREAS, recent research indicates that pornography can be biologically addictive, which
2.10 means the user requires more novelty, often in the form of more shocking material, in order to be
2.11 satisfied; and

2.12 WHEREAS, this biological addiction leads to increasing themes of harmful sexual behaviors,
2.13 extreme degradation, violence, child sexual abuse, and child pornography; and

2.14 WHEREAS, pornography use is linked to lessening desire in young men to marry,
2.15 dissatisfaction in marriage, and infidelity; and

2.16 WHEREAS, this link demonstrates that pornography has a detrimental effect on the individual,
2.17 the family, their relationships, and the community; and

2.18 WHEREAS, overcoming pornography's harms can be beyond the capability of the individual
2.19 to address alone; NOW, THEREFORE,

2.20 BE IT RESOLVED by the Legislature of the State of Minnesota that it (1) recognizes
2.21 pornography as a public health hazard leading to a broad spectrum of individual and public health
2.22 impacts and societal harms; and (2) recognizes the need for education, prevention, research, and
2.23 policy change at the community and societal level in order to address the pornography epidemic
2.24 that is harming the people of the State of Minnesota and the nation.

2.25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of State of the State of Minnesota is directed
2.26 to prepare copies of this memorial and transmit them to the President of the United States and
2.27 Minnesota's Senators and Representatives in Congress.