



MELISSA AGARD
STATE SENATOR

February 17, 2022

Thank you Chairperson Wanggaard and members of the Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety for allowing me to submit testimony on Senate Bill 821.

No one wants to be flashed by a stranger as they are walking down the street. The same logic must apply to the digital world where folks also do not want or appreciate an unsolicited lewd image being sent to them. Unfortunately, this happens frequently enough—bad actors hiding behind the anonymity of screens are emboldened to behave in many ways they would not in the real world.

While these unsolicited lewd images may seem innocuous to the sender, those on the receiving end of non-consensual messages are left feeling vulnerable and violated. Senate Bill 821 addresses the sending of lewd images between adults without the consent of the recipient. This does not mean that the government will be interfering with consenting adults who choose to share private images, but rather works to ensure that consent is enforced in the digital world.

While the tech and private sectors are taking important steps to address the sending of unsolicited lewd images by establishing community standards and privacy detectors, it is imperative that we as law makers also look at our state statutes to adapt them to fit our digital world. We know that sexual predators will continue to violate and victimize others, so as legislators it is important that we take concrete steps to address this predatory and disturbing behavior.

We must be working together to bring standards of conduct on the Internet closer in line with our expectations of behavior in the real world. As our digital world is changing fast, it's vital that our laws follow in suit. This bipartisan bill works to protect those who receive unsolicited lewd images and to ensure that action is taken before this problem becomes pervasive.

Thank you for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to reach out to my office with any questions.

In Service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melissa Agard".

Melissa Agard
State Senator
16th Senate District