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May 7, 2026

The Honorable Susan Rubio
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 8710
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 1276 (Rubio): Crimes: sexual exploitation of a child – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Rubio:

On behalf of the City of Sunnyvale, we want to express our support of Senate Bill 1276, the End Child Exploitation Act, which closes a critical loophole in the law by clearly establishing that viewing child sexual abuse livestreams is a standalone criminal offense.

Larry Klein
Mayor

Richard Mehlinger
Vice Mayor

Alysa Cisneros
Councilmember

Murali Srinivasan
Councilmember

Linda Sell
Councilmember

Charlsie Chang
Councilmember

Eileen Le
Councilmember

SB 1276 addresses a critical gap in California law and represents an important step forward in protecting children from sexual exploitation in the digital age. Under current law, California broadly criminalizes the possession, production, distribution, and exchange of child sexual abuse material. For example, Penal Code Section 311.11 makes possession a crime, and Section 311.3 prohibits the development, duplication, or exchange of such material. These statutes have long served as essential tools for holding offenders accountable.

However, existing law does not explicitly establish that merely “viewing” child sexual abuse material—particularly via livestream—is a standalone criminal offense. In many cases, viewing results in cached or stored files that can be prosecuted as possession. Yet livestreaming presents a unique challenge: because the content may not be saved or retained, it can be difficult to prove possession or control. This creates a dangerous legal gray area in which individuals who knowingly watch the real-time sexual exploitation of a child may evade accountability.

As livestreaming platforms such as Facebook Live, TikTok LIVE, Discord, and Twitch have grown in popularity, so too has their misuse by bad actors seeking to exploit children in real time. The temporary and often ephemeral nature of livestreamed content makes it particularly attractive to perpetrators and viewers alike, allowing this abuse to occur with reduced risk of detection under current statutory frameworks.



SB 1276 thoughtfully closes this loophole by clarifying that knowingly watching a livestream of a minor engaged in sexual conduct constitutes sexual exploitation of a child. Additionally, the bill modernizes California law by ensuring that digitally altered or AI-generated depictions of minors engaged in sexual conduct are also clearly prohibited. In doing so, SB 1276 aligns our legal framework with the realities of today's technology and reinforces California's longstanding commitment to protecting children.

Sunnyvale supports SB 1276 because it aligns with Goal SN-3 by strengthening the City's ability to address evolving criminal threats and protect vulnerable populations. Closing legal loopholes improves accountability and supports effective prosecution of serious offenses. This is consistent with Sunnyvale's commitment to reducing crime and enhancing community safety.

This measure sends a clear and unequivocal message: all forms of participation in the sexual exploitation of children—whether through creation, distribution, or knowing consumption—are unacceptable and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

For these reasons, the City of Sunnyvale supports SB 1276. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue and for your continued commitment to safeguarding vulnerable children. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Chief Daniel Pistor, Director of Public Safety at dpistor@sunnyvale.ca.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Larry Klein".

Larry Klein

Mayor

cc: Senator Dr. Aisha Wahab
Assembly Member Patrick Ahrens
City Council
Tim Kirby, City Manager
Sarah Johnson-Rios, Assistant City Manager
Daniel Pistor, Director of Public Safety