Testimony to the Senate Education Committee
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SB 350 **Proponent**
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Dear Madame Chair and Committee,

Thank you for listening to my testimony supporting SB 350.

I am afraid it's negligent to continue to ignore the overwhelming research that exposes how educational technology known as "EdTech" harms learning, cognitive growth, and student well-being.

Neuroscientist Dr. Jared Cooney Horvath issues a powerful warning: the rapid rise of technology in education is contributing to a sharp decline in intelligence across key metrics. He has learned through years of research that "The more tech in schools, the more learning and wellbeing goes down. For generations, we've seen steady progress in IQ from one cohort to the next. That upward trajectory ends with Gen Z. On every single cognitive measure they perform worse than we do: attention, memory, creative thinking, divergent thinking, and critical thinking. And this cognitive demise is accelerating with Gen Alpha."

It's clear that EdTech is problematic and harmful.

First of all, EdTech tools do not improve learning. In fact, they erode deep thinking, content retention, and classroom engagement. When a computer

is used for school, students typically last fewer than 6 minutes before playing video games, accessing social media, messaging friends, and engaging with other digital distractions. This is why, when using a laptop during class, students typically spend 38 minutes of every hour off-task.

Second, EdTech is a threat to student privacy. 1:1 devices were not intended to enhance learning - they were created to harvest student data. Many adaptive and interactive learning tools use facial expressions, voice recordings, and engagement patterns to collect, steal, and sell student information.

Majority of EdTech's privacy agreements say: QUOTE

"When you access or use our service, you are deemed to consent to the collection, use, retention, transfer, structuring, manipulation, storage, transmission, and/or disclosure of your information."

END QUOTE

Third, EdTech reinforces addiction pathways. Excess interactive screentime and gamified learning flood young brains with inhumane amounts of dopamine leading to depression and addiction. Screens send unnatural and over-stimulating messages to the nervous system - contributing to hyper-arousal and triggering fight-or-flight responses. Screens also cripple executive functioning skills which include problem solving, focus, working memory, self-control, and self-motivation.

Lastly, EdTech harms teachers and threatens the teaching profession. Instead of looking at eager faces ready to learn, teachers are staring at the backs of computer screens. Instead of passionately teaching enriching content, teachers are policing student digital activity minute by minute. Instead of building deep and lasting relationships with students, teachers are struggling to form bonds with disengaged and overstimulated kids. When I get asked by principals if I will ever consider teaching again, my answer is simple: “No. I have no desire to compete with the additive digital devices schools have chosen over their teachers.” Unfortunately, I know many other teachers who feel this way.

Please sign SB 350 into law and rescue education from this failed experiment. Let’s fund students and teachers, not big tech. Thank you.