



April 7, 2026

Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, Chair  
Assembly Privacy and Consumer Protection Committee  
1021 O Street, Room 1100  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2023 (Wicks) Companion chatbots: children's safety - SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Rebecca Bauer-Kahan and Members of the Assembly Privacy and Consumer Protection Committee,

The California Catholic Conference is pleased to express its strong **support for AB 2023**, as amended on 3/25/26, which strengthens protections for children interacting with artificial intelligence, including companion chatbots.

The bishops of California affirm that every child is created in the image and likeness of God and deserves to be protected from harm, especially in environments that are increasingly shaping their development. As artificial intelligence becomes more integrated into daily life, these technologies must be designed and monitored with the safety, dignity, and well-being of minors as a central priority.

AB 2023 takes meaningful and necessary steps to ensure that operators of companion chatbots are held accountable for protecting children. By requiring comprehensive risk assessments, independent audits, and reporting to the Attorney General, this bill promotes transparency, responsibility, and proactive safeguards against harmful content, including exposure to material related to self-harm or exploitation.

Catholic teaching calls us to uphold the dignity of the human person and to act in solidarity with the most vulnerable, particularly children who may be disproportionately impacted by emerging technologies. Young people are still developing the capacity for discernment and are especially susceptible to manipulation or harmful interactions in digital spaces. This bill reflects a commitment to the common good by ensuring that innovation does not outpace the moral responsibility to protect human life and flourishing.

The California Catholic Conference has also engaged in ongoing dialogue with national partners and experts on the ethical use of technology, reinforcing the importance of clear guardrails, accountability, and education regarding AI and digital platforms.

For these reasons, as the official public policy voice of the Catholic Church in California, we urge you to vote "AYE" on AB 2023. Should you have any questions regarding our position, please do not hesitate to contact Samara Palko, Director of Education, at 916-477-0631 or [spalko@cacatholic.org](mailto:spalko@cacatholic.org).

Sincerely yours,

Kathleen Domingo  
Executive Director

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