



Parliament of the Cayman Islands

PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTION NO. 10 of 2025-2026

Limiting social media for children under the age of sixteen

WHEREAS the Government of the Cayman Islands has a duty to safeguard the welfare, mental health, and healthy development of children and young persons;

AND WHEREAS a growing body of evidence indicates that intensive use of social media is associated with increased risks of anxiety, depression, sleep disruption, as well as cyberbullying, online exploitation, addictive behaviours, and exposure to age-inappropriate content, the scale of which presents population-level mental health concern;

AND WHEREAS children under the age of sixteen are in critical stages of cognitive and social development, and evidence of potential harms from intensive social media use justifies precautionary age-based protections grounded in child welfare principles;

AND WHEREAS multiple jurisdictions, including Australia and several European and Asian nations, have either proposed or enacted legislation, recognising such measures as proportionate child-protection interventions rather than limitations on freedom of expression;

AND WHEREAS this Honourable House recognises the positive role of digital technologies in education, creativity, communication, and economic participation, and affirms that responsible digital technology use is compatible with strong child protection standards and that these measures seek to delay, rather than permanently deny, access until an appropriate stage of cognitive maturity.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Government considers the introduction of legislation to prohibit access to social media platforms by persons under the age of sixteen (16) years within the Cayman Islands as a child protection and public health measure;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government considers that any such legislation shall place primary responsibility for compliance, age verification, and enforcement on social media platform operators, and shall not criminalise or penalise children or young persons;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government considers that "Social Media Platforms" shall be defined as digital services for social interaction and content sharing, and shall exclude:

- Educational platforms;
- Messaging services used primarily for private communication;
- Essential services required for school or public services;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government considers that the proposed framework shall include proportionate regulatory sanctions for non-compliant platforms while ensuring safeguards for data privacy, user rights, and constitutional protections;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government considers accompanying the legislation with public education initiatives, including digital literacy programmes for parents and accessible mental health resources for young people;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government considers that the legislation shall be subject to periodic review, to ensure it is consistent with constitutional protections, and remains consistent with human rights obligations and the principle of proportionality;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government considers commencing stakeholder consultation and legislative drafting without delay, recognising the urgency of protecting children from demonstrable and preventable digital harms, and affirms that this resolution shall not be construed as an endorsement of censorship, surveillance, or content-based regulation, but as a child protection and public health measure grounded in evidence, proportionality, and the best interests of the child.

Moved By: Hon. Pearlina McGaw-Lumsden, JP, MP
Deputy Speaker
Elected Member for George Town West

Seconded By: Mr. Roy Tatum, JP, MP
Elected Member for Red Bay

Received in the Office of the Clerk this 24th day of January, 2026.

Passed by the Parliament of the Cayman Islands this 5th day of March, 2026.

Clerk of the Parliament