

Senators,

Thank you for taking personal stories and exhibits from our private lives into consideration as you weigh a yes or no vote on SB 282.

At the beginning of last week, on a Tuesday night, I woke at 3 in the morning because I heard something moving right next to my bed. My eyes popped open as I sat up, searching the dark and a figure dropped to the ground at my bedside. It was my son, 10 years old, who had crept along the bedroom floor on his belly like a special ops soldier. He was trying to reach my bedside table where his school iPad was plugged in to charge. This was, I repeat at 3 in the morning. And this wasn't the first time I'd been awake in the middle of the night managing my son's screen behavior. In the 2nd grade I once found him in the garage, sitting in my car with his school iPad on at 4:30am. The only unusual thing about the recent Mission Impossible style operation to get the iPad out of my room was that the device was in my room at all. You see, we have laid ground rules that the devices be left at school ALWAYS, a boundary my 7.5 year old daughter happily honors.. And when it's discovered at home, it is locked in a gun safe in our basement. This is the same safe where we kept personal iPads until the battles over hiding and negotiating healthy boundaries and rewriting screen contracts and discovering them behind couches or under mattresses just didn't feel worth it anymore. The stress of managing our children's, but especially our son's, screen time is so incredibly stressful. You see, he can't regulate the urge to play on it. I hope that that is something that changes with time and maturity since clearly these devices are here to stay and he will have to interact with them. But for now, he's still a child and it is, from all mom my observations, unrealistic to ask him to check his behavior with the iPad or a smart phone. Having it freely accessible at home or at school is like asking him to go on a diet and then placing a piece of cake on his desk. Please take into consideration in your deliberation on SB 282 that these devices affect individual children differently. For my, son, unfettered access to a personal iPad in the classroom is an OBSTACLE to learning, a complete distraction. The tool needs to serve all students and having healthy limits based on current research seems a basic minimum. Please remember that one family, our family, keeps the iPad given to our child by his school in a coded gun safe.

Thank you,

Abigail, mother of 2 from Bend, OR