



Tech Oversight

CALIFORNIA

May 19, 2025

RE: AB 853 (Wicks) California AI Transparency Act - Support

Dear Assemblymember Wicks,

Tech Oversight California (TOC), an advocacy organization dedicated to advancing meaningful tech accountability reforms and protecting Californians from the harms of Big Tech's exploitative practices, strongly supports AB 853.

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) technologies have rapidly evolved, enabling the creation of images, audio, video, and text from simple prompts. As these tools become more sophisticated, it is increasingly difficult to distinguish between authentic, human-created content and synthetic, AI-generated media. This growing ambiguity is already harming the public—fueling scams, facilitating the creation of non-consensual intimate imagery, and enabling bad actors to spread disinformation that undermines public safety and democratic institutions. The result is an accelerating "truth decay" that erodes public trust in information.

California took important steps to address this problem with last year's SB 942, the AI Transparency Act, which requires AI developers to implement content provenance by 2026, thereby improving transparency. However, additional measures are needed to keep up with evolving technology and address the rapid spread of deceptive content. AB 853 builds on this progress with two critical provisions:

1. **Device-Level Provenance:** Cameras and recording devices sold in California must include an option to embed provenance information, identifying whether content is human-generated or AI-generated.

2. **Platform Transparency:** Social media and online platforms must display the source of shared content using provenance data, helping users assess its authenticity and reliability.

These provisions are essential to informing the public, safeguarding the digital information environment and rebuilding the public information sphere.

As GenAI tools become more prevalent and sophisticated, it is crucial that individuals are empowered to recognize whether or not content has been created using GenAI. AB 853 provides practical, forward-looking tools to meet this challenge.

For these reasons, Tech Oversight California is proud to support AB 853 and looks forward to working with you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sacha Haworth', enclosed within a dashed rectangular border.

Sacha Haworth

Executive Director, Tech Oversight California