

**RESOLUTION**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSION  
OF KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE,  
EXPRESSING THE COMMISSION’S  
COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING  
THE INNOCENCE OF CHILDREN.**

**RESOLUTION: R-24-11-903**

**REQUESTED BY: COMMISSIONER LEE**

**PREPARED BY: COMMISSIONER LEE**

**APPROVED AS TO FORM  
BUT NOT AS TO  
SUBSTANCE: \_\_\_\_\_  
DIRECTOR OF LAW**

**APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE**

**VETOED: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE**

**VETO  
OVERRIDE: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE**

**MINUTE  
BOOK \_\_\_\_\_ PAGE \_\_\_\_\_**

**WHEREAS, Knox County, Tennessee has a charter form of government that affords broad powers, as explained in Article I-Powers and Functions, which includes the statement “Knox County Government shall exercise any power or perform any function which is not denied by the Constitution of the State of Tennessee;” and**

**WHEREAS, Article II-Legislative Branch of the Knox County Charter states in Sec. 2.01 the “legislative power of the County includes all lawful authority to adopt ordinances, emergency ordinances, and resolutions governing the operation of government or regulating the conduct and affairs of the residents of the county...;” and**

**WHEREAS, community standards are a key component of the determination of obscenity in the United States, based upon Miller v. California, 413 US 15, 24-25 (1973) and other cases; and**

**WHEREAS, the Knox County Board of Commissioners are the representatives of the residents of Knox County, and are empowered by law to establish what the prevailing standards are in the Knox County community with respect to what is suitable for taxpayer funded materials, activities, and events that include minors; and**

**WHEREAS, the future of Knox County, Tennessee relies on the health and wellbeing of its children and young people; and**

**WHEREAS, children are our greatest treasure, and our most vulnerable population. We must always weigh the risk of harm to minors in public policy decisions; and**

**WHEREAS, we value integrity and excellence and will not trade the innocence of minors for other governmental goals; and**

**WHEREAS, protecting the innocence of children should be an issue of concern for all adults; and**

**WHEREAS, children are increasingly over-sexualized in our nation, state, and county; and**

**WHEREAS, according to a recent Tennessee Department of Health report title “Sexual Violence” there were 1,798 counts of sexual assault victims in Knox County from 2016 to 2020 with 944 of those cases (52.5%) being minors under the age of 18; and**

**WHEREAS, according to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation the average age of a child sold for sex is 13 years old and human trafficking is the second-fastest growing criminal industry; and**

**WHEREAS, the exposure to and normalization of sexualized behaviors reduces children’s inhibitions and ability to protect themselves from the sexual advances of others; and**

**WHEREAS, children learn from observing and subsequently acting out the behaviors they have observed. Children who have observed sexualized behaviors or who have been the victim of sexual assault may act out with other children at home or school, which may lead to additional child victims; and**

**WHEREAS, the normalization of sexualized conduct and materials to children is not in the long-term interest of children or society. Wholesome, good, and honorable matter and conduct should be promoted to children instead; and**

**WHEREAS, in July 2024 the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit stated in Friends of George’s, Inc v Steven J. Mulroy, 108 F.4th 431, 438 (6th Cir. 2024), “there is no constitutional interest in exhibiting indecent material to minors;” and**

**WHEREAS, Tennessee Code Annotated 7-51-1401 defines “adult entertainment,” “sexually-oriented material,” and “specified sexual activities;” and**

**WHEREAS, Tennessee Code Annotated 39-17-901 defines “harmful to minors,” “matter,” “nudity,” “obscene,” “prurient interest,” and “sexual conduct;” and**

**WHEREAS, Knox County is experiencing significant budget and debt challenges and taxpayer resources need to be prioritized for public safety, education, infrastructure, and other essential services.**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF KNOX COUNTY AS FOLLOWS:**

**The Knox County Board of Commissioners is committed to protecting the innocence of children, and to cultivating healthy children, families, communities, and institutions.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, no county staff or resources shall be allocated, directly or indirectly, to entertainment, materials, activities, matter, conduct, programs, events, content, or institutions which support, normalize, or encourage the harmful sexualization of minors as defined by Tennessee Code Annotated.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, taxpayer funded resources currently allocated to harmful materials, activities, and institutions engaging, directly or indirectly, in sexualization of children shall be reallocated to essential services including, but not limited to, public safety and infrastructure.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution applies to the extent that it does not conflict with Tennessee law.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board encourages individuals and communities to promote the good and the honorable to children rather than the normalization of harmful sexual behaviors, so to protect the health and wellbeing of our children and the future of our county.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution is to take effect from and after its passage, as provided by the Charter of Knox County, Tennessee, the public welfare requiring it.**

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**Presiding Officer of the Commission      Date**

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**County Clerk      Date**

**Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**County Mayor** **Date**

**Vetoed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**County Mayor** **Date**