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Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Sean Pauzaskie. I am a practicing neurologist and Medical Director of the Neurorights Foundation. I care for patients with stroke, brain injury, and disorders of consciousness—patients whose ability to communicate, decide, and advocate for themselves is often impaired.

That clinical reality shapes how I think about this bill.

Because at its core, this legislation is about protecting individuals in moments when they are most vulnerable—and when the systems around them matter most. This bill addresses several important areas, including artificial intelligence in healthcare, patient communication, and utilization review.

Those provisions are timely and necessary.

But I would like to focus my remarks on what I believe is one of the most important aspects of this bill: the recognition and protection of neurological rights.

The bill proposes to establish privacy standards for neural data and to define protections around how technologies interact with the human nervous system.

This is significant.

Because neural data is fundamentally different from other forms of health data. It is not just information about the body. It is information generated by the activity of the brain and nervous system—the biological substrate of thought, intention, and experience.

In clinical practice, we are already seeing the early stages of this shift.

Technologies are being developed that can: detect patterns of attention and fatigue, assist patients in communicating through neural signals, and interpret brain activity in ways that were not possible even a decade ago.

These advances hold tremendous promise.

But they also raise new questions:
Who owns this data?

How is it used?

And what protections are in place to ensure that it is not accessed or used inappropriately?

This bill takes an important step by recognizing that these questions are not theoretical—they are emerging now.

By establishing privacy standards for neural data, Vermont is acknowledging that existing frameworks may not be sufficient for this category of information. That is a forward-looking and appropriate approach. The bill also addresses the interaction between electronic devices and individuals' neurological activity.

This is another critical area.

As technologies evolve, the boundary between observing neural activity and interacting with it becomes increasingly important. Ensuring that this interaction occurs within clear, regulated boundaries is essential to maintaining trust in both medical and technological systems.

From my perspective as a neurologist, this is not just a technical issue—it is a clinical and ethical one. Patients entrust us with their most personal information. As that information begins to include data derived directly from the nervous system, the stakes increase.

The artificial intelligence provisions in this bill are also important, particularly those related to: transparency in patient communication, oversight of mental health tools, and limitations on automated utilization review.

These provisions reinforce a consistent principle: that technology in healthcare should support—not replace—clear, accountable, and patient-centered decision-making.

But what distinguishes this bill is that it goes further. It begins to define a category of rights that are specific to the brain and nervous system. And that is where I believe its long-term significance lies.

Finally, the bill strengthens the role of the Artificial Intelligence Advisory Council, extending its duration and expanding its responsibility to evaluate the ethical and responsible use of AI across healthcare, human services, and education.

This is an important mechanism.

Because the issues addressed here will continue to evolve.

Ongoing oversight ensures that policy can adapt as technology advances.

In closing, I would emphasize this:

We are at an early stage in the development of technologies that can measure and interpret neural activity. The decisions made now will shape how those technologies are used in the future. This bill does not attempt to solve every challenge. But it establishes a foundation—one that recognizes the uniqueness of neural data and the importance of protecting individuals as these capabilities develop.

From both a clinical and policy perspective, I believe that is a meaningful and necessary step.

Thank you for your time, and I welcome any questions.