

**Statement for the Record of Rep. Anna G. Eshoo**  
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology  
*Fostering a Healthier Internet to Protect Consumers*  
2123 Rayburn House Office Building  
October 16, 2019

Chairman Doyle and Chairwoman Schakowsky, thank you for holding today's joint-Subcommittee hearing, and thank you to each witness for testifying today. In particular, I welcome Ms. Katherine Oyama of Google, which is headquartered in my District, and Mr. Steve Huffman of Reddit, who joined me for a Town Hall Meeting on net neutrality at Stanford University earlier this year. This important discussion is happening at a critical juncture in the development of the internet ecosystem.

Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act is the reason that the internet economy took off in the United States. It undergirds our ability to look up answers to questions, communicate with friends, stream videos, share photos, and so many other parts of our lives. As we discuss amending Section 230, we can't forget that it is a critical foundation for much of modern society.

I was a Conferee for the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which included Section 230. I believed in the value of Section 230 then, and I believe in the importance of maintaining Section 230 now. I'm always open to debating how laws, including this one, can be improved, but I caution my colleagues to proceed very carefully in considering amendments to Section 230, since such a large part of our economy and society depends on it.

All of that being said, there are many issues with today's internet that could not have been conceived of in 1996. Congress can and should aim to solve these problems. The illegal sale of arms and opioids; radicalization of vulnerable individuals; planning mass violence; child sex abuse imagery; abuse and harassment of women and marginalized communities, especially through revenge pornography; deepfakes; misinformation, disinformation, and election interference; and doxing and swatting are among the problematic practices that we should demand platforms moderate vigorously. When platforms fall short, we should consider making these acts violations of criminal law, to the degree that they are not already, before we view them through the lens of Section 230.

I look forward to a healthy and vigorous discussion to help inform our efforts to ensure that we have a healthy internet ecosystem that protects all users.