

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Member Rep. Anna G. Eshoo

Hearing on “Fanning the Flames: Disinformation and Extremism in the Media”

February 24, 2021

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this very hearing today.

Let me put it bluntly: misinformation is killing Americans and damaging our democracy. We must examine how conspiracies and lies convince people to dismiss public health measures and refuse life-saving vaccines. This is not about left versus right. This is about life and death.

Similarly, the January 6th insurrection was built on a foundation of lies about mail-in ballots, voting machines, and election results.

The First Amendment prohibits Congress from enacting laws abridging the freedom of speech, and I’m an ardent supporter of it. It does not, however, stop us from examining the public health and democratic implications of misinformation.

So I thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this very this very important hearing today, and I yield back. I also thank the witnesses who are with us today and am anxious to hear from them.