

**Opening Statement of Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr.
House Energy and Commerce Committee
Consumer Protection and Commerce Subcommittee
Hearing on
“Inclusion in Tech: How Diversity Benefits All Americans”**

March 6, 2019

As this Subcommittee knows well, the influence of the Internet and technology in our lives has grown exponentially over the past two decades. Our daily lives as consumers and workers have become dependent on technology.

But while the United States has become more and more diverse, the workforce of the technology sector has not kept up. And we are seeing the effects of that in the products and services we use—like wearable fitness trackers that don’t work for people with dark skin, online job advertisements targeted at men over women, and websites with buttons and links too small for

people with motor impairments to use. Without inclusive workforces, too often product design leaves people out. The result can be embarrassing for the company when discovered and harmful for society when a discriminatory result is not identified and fixed.

These are complicated and often uncomfortable discussions, but they are necessary to start to make changes. The Congressional Black Caucus launched its Tech 2020 initiative in 2015 and has been working to hold companies accountable since. And several members of this Committee have been working on these issues for years. I'd like to yield time to some of them today, beginning with Mr. Lujan for one minute.

Thank you, I will also yield a minute to Mr. Butterfield for one minute.

Thank you. And I will yield my final minute to Mr. Rush.