

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce Chair Janice D. Schakowsky
Hearing on, “Holding Big Tech Accountable: Legislation to Protect Online Users”

March 1, 2022

Today, we begin the third legislative hearing in the Energy and Commerce Committee to consider legislation to reign in Big Tech.

This subcommittee has worked long and hard to respond to the challenges presented by Big Tech.

But despite our scrutiny and repeated calls for change, the tech industry has not responded.

Now is the time for change and for accountability.

We know social media platforms can be used for good. We’ve seen that in the heroic stories of the Ukrainian people over the last week.

But misinformation and disinformation are seemingly still amplified, and that is having dramatic costs for people around the world.

For example, Russia’s state-owned media is targeting Spanish speakers around the globe with disinformation to distort the narrative around their invasion of Ukraine.

Previously, social media abetted a genocide in Myanmar and a deadly insurrection on January 6th.

We are done with apologies and denials from tech companies.

We are done turning a blind eye while billionaires build economic empires by feeding Americans an ever-increasing diet of disinformation.

It is time to regulate.

We will consider five bills including Ms. Eshoo’s bill, the “Banning Surveillance Advertising Act,” which I am proud to co-lead, to ban targeted advertising that can track individual users across the internet.

Ms. Clarke’s bill, the “Algorithmic Accountability Act,” will require tech companies using artificial intelligence to assess the impact of their algorithms on consumers.

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Discrimination of protected classes has no place in our digital world.

Ms. Trahan's bill, the "Digital Services Oversight and Safety Act," improves transparency for consumers and ensures researchers can measure the impact of social media on our society.

Mr. Bilirakis's bill, the "CAPTURE Act," studies whether law enforcement has the resources to keep us safe online.

Mr. Mullin's bill, the "Increasing Consumers' Education on Law Enforcement Act," empowers consumers to protect themselves.

As we refine these proposals, I have no doubt they can help create a fairer, safer internet.

One that protects consumers. And whose business model isn't rooted in discrimination.

I look forward to hearing how we can improve these proposals to achieve that goal.

Thank you to the witnesses for joining us today.

I now recognize the Ranking Member, Mr. Bilirakis, for five minutes.