



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY
REPUBLICANS Frank Lucas, Ranking Member

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Investigations & Oversight Subcommittee Hearing Statement
“Online Imposters and Disinformation”
Sept. 26, 2019

Thank you, Chairwoman Sherrill, for holding this hearing on the growing problem of disinformation on social media.

We all know that photos these days can be digitally altered so easily that it’s all but impossible to tell what’s real and what’s not.

There’s now a growing problem where audio and video can be altered so convincingly that it can appear that someone has said or done something that never happened. These deepfakes can be produced more and more easily.

You know, there was once a rumor that I MYSELF was a deepfake, just impersonating the real Frank Lucas. The good news—or maybe the bad news—is that technology hasn’t come quite that far and I am the real deal.

But deepfake technology IS getting more sophisticated. And it’s also getting easier to produce. As our witnesses will discuss today, the technology for generating deepfakes is improving at a rapid clip. Soon, anyone with a decent computer and access to training data will be able to create increasingly convincing deepfakes that are difficult to detect and debunk.

False and misleading content like this undermines public trust and disrupts civil society.

Unfortunately, the technology for generating deepfakes is developing at a speed and scale that dwarfs the technology needed to detect and debunk deepfakes. We must help level the playing field.

This Committee took the first step to do that yesterday by passing bipartisan legislation aimed at improving research into the technology to detect deepfakes.

I want to commend Representative Anthony Gonzalez for introducing this bill and for his leadership on the issue of technology and security.

I often say that one of our most important jobs on the Science Committee is communicating to the American people the value of scientific research and development. Legislation and hearings like this are a great example of how the work we do here can directly benefit people across the country.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses, and I yield back my time.

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