

October 27, 2021

Mark Zuckerberg
Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Facebook, Inc.
1 Hacker Way
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Dear Mr. Zuckerberg:

I write to follow up on concerns that were raised during the Senate Commerce Committee hearing titled *Protecting Kids Online: Testimony from a Facebook Whistleblower*. While I remain concerned about censorship that occurs on your platforms, my focus today is on the recent revelations about Facebook and Instagram's harmful effects on children. The documents that Ms. Frances Haugen shared provided alarming insight to internal research conducted at Facebook and the harm its platforms, including Instagram, cause kids and teenagers. Therefore, I respectfully request that you provide the following information:

- Any research that Facebook has conducted into what it refers to as "problematic use" cases, or the addictiveness of its products or services, on any of its platforms;
- The findings of Facebook's research relating to parents' ability or inability to adequately supervise children's social media use, including parents' lack of knowledge or experience with advising children on the dangers of social media and how to be safe online;
- Any additional information that has been presented to you, other executives, or the Board of Trustees regarding parents' ability to help their children if subjected to bullying on the platform and confronted with self-esteem and body image issues including eating disorders, and other inappropriate content including sexually explicit material;
- Descriptions of the tools Facebook provides parents to help their children use the platforms safely;
- A description of how Facebook is addressing and resolving these harmful effects; and
- A firm commitment to making Facebook's internal research on the harmful effects its platforms have on kids and teenagers public.

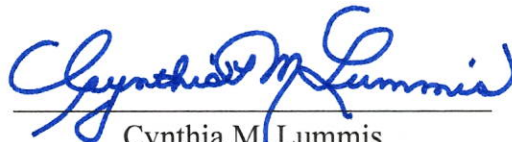
As you well know, Facebook, and its subsidiaries, form the largest social media networks in the world, touting billions of users monthly. This position puts Facebook in a unique position because of its access to an unprecedented amount of data. For example, the number of monthly users sharing personal and sensitive data within the control of Facebook is more than eight times

larger than the population of the United States.¹ By extension, Facebook has the sole opportunity to leverage the large swaths of data it collects to conduct research into the deleterious effects its services can have on the public's social and mental health.

Despite this, Facebook has stonewalled outsiders from conducting any research, even in the public forum. In fact, in August of earlier this year, Facebook blocked a New York University research project which had successfully recruited more than 6,500 volunteers to study Facebook's targeted advertisement system.² It has also become abundantly clear from the *Wall Street Journal's* report, "The Facebook Files," that Facebook has continuously and unacceptably misled Congress.³ In light of Ms. Haugen's testimony, it is evident that that these reports only scratch the surface of the detailed research that Facebook has withheld from policymakers. This practice must end. Sunlight disinfects, and it is my hope that congressional oversight of Facebook's internal research will bring appropriate accountability to these platforms.

I appreciate your timely attention to this matter. Please provide the requested information as soon as possible, but no later than November 12, 2021. If you have any additional questions, please contact Holt Edwards at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

Sincerely,



Cynthia M. Lummis
United States Senator

¹ Compare Facebook Investor Relations, *Facebook Reports Second Quarter 2021 Results*, Facebook (July 28, 2021) (<https://investor.fb.com/investor-news/press-release-details/2021/facebook-reports-second-quarter-2021-results/default.aspx>) (highlighting Facebook's monthly active users totaled 2.90 billion as of June 30, 2021) with United States Census Bureau, *U.S. and World Population Clock*, Census (Oct. 6, 2021) (<https://www.census.gov/popclock/>) (identifying the U.S. population as 332,815,808 people).

² See Meghan Bobrowsky, *Facebook Disables Access for NYU Research Into Political-Ad Targeting*, The Wall Street Journal (Aug. 4, 2021) (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-cuts-off-access-for-nyu-research-into-political-ad-targeting-11628052204>).

³ See Salvador Rodriguez, *Facebook used Big Tobacco playbook to exploit teens and children, senators say at hearing after WSJ series*, CNBC (Sep. 30, 2021) (<https://www.cnb.com/2021/09/30/senators-say-facebook-used-big-tobacco-playbook-to-exploit-kids.html>).