

October 1, 2018

Chairman John Thune
Ranking Member Bill Nelson
Senate Commerce Committee
Washington, DC

Dear Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson,

We appreciate your interest in consumer privacy and the hearing you convened recently to explore this topic.

Still, our concerns remain that the hearing, with only industry representatives, was unnecessarily biased. Many of the problems consumers face, as well as the solutions we would propose, were simply never mentioned. There is little point in asking industry groups how they would like to be regulated. None of the proposals endorsed by the witnesses yesterday would have any substantial impact on the data collection practices of their firms. Such regulation will simply fortify business interests to the detriment of online users. And the absence of consumer advocates at the first hearing was also missed opportunity for a direct exchange about points made by the industry witnesses.

We understand that you are planning to hold a second hearing in early October. In keeping with the structure of the first hearing, we ask that you invite six consumer privacy experts to testify before the Committee. We would also suggest that you organize an additional panel with other experts and enforcement officials, including Dr. Jelenik, the Chair of the European Data Protection Board, as well as State Attorneys General, who are now on the front lines of consumer protection in the United States.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Access Humboldt
Access Now
Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood
Center for Digital Democracy
Common Sense
Consumer Action
Consumer Federation of America
Customer Commons
Digital Privacy Alliance
Electronic Frontier Foundation
EPIC
Media Alliance
National Association of Consumer Advocates
New America's Open Technology Institute

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New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG)
Privacy Rights Clearing House
U.S. Public Interest Research Group (U.S. PIRG)
World Privacy Forum