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ADAM B. SCHIFF
MEMBER OF CONGRESS · 28TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

2309 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

245 EAST OLIVE AVENUE, SUITE 200
BURBANK, CA 91502

@RepAdamSchiff · schiff.house.gov

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Sundar Pichai
Chief Executive
Officer Alphabet Inc.
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway
Mountain View, CA 94043

Susan Wojcicki
Chief Executive Officer
YouTube, LLC
901 Cherry Avenue
San Bruno, CA 94066

Dear Mr. Pichai and Ms. Wojcicki:

We write to express continuing concern with extreme and harmful content on your platforms and how your companies promote this information to users. Specifically, we write about the new and growing national security concern posed by individuals who consume “incel” content that they were introduced to through Google searches and spread through dedicated incel YouTube channels.

Incels, or “involuntarily celibates,” are typically young men who express extreme hatred of women, women’s equality under the law, and believe women should be subjugated by men. As Members of Congress, it is our duty to investigate the impact and influence that social media platforms and search engines, such as yours, have on our country and its security. Recent public research points to an increase in the scale and extremism of incel content, and the corresponding threat of incel proponents to the safety and security of Americans, particularly women and girls.

The Center for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH) released a [report](#) last month examining the world’s largest public incel forum and a network of ‘feeder’ forums that funnel desperate and despairing men with mental health issues, economic problems, or body image issues towards the incel ideology.¹ CCDH found that YouTube channels act as pathways into those communities and provide a corpus of ideological instruction, recruiting material, and other content that encourages incels. The research involved analysis of over a million posts (1,183,812) by thousands of members over 18 months on the world’s leading public incel websites and pages, as well as content on YouTube.

The CCDH report makes clear that misogynist communities have created male-supremacist online spaces to promote their hateful and violent ideology, blaming women and minority groups for their problems. While incels have been described as loners or socially isolated, they in fact are embedded in highly active, densely-interconnected online communities that encourage and celebrate their horrific beliefs and acts.

¹ <https://counterhate.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/CCDH-The-Incelosphere..pdf>

Incels have been linked to the murder or injury of over 100 people, mostly women, in the last 10 years alone.² These communities and this ideology are products of the Internet age - in which extreme individuals can congregate and collaborate to promote hate and abuse with impunity online. Recent mass shootings and other violent tragedies have confirmed that violent extremism, particularly when targeted at impressionable and vulnerable young men, poses a risk to our safety and security. We must take their threats seriously and examine the pathways that encourage them into violent extremism.

In reviewing the world's leading incel forum, CCDH found that its members post about rape every 29 minutes; that more than 20 percent of posts include misogynistic or racist language; and that posts approving of rape and promoting mass murder are prevalent. CCDH also found two disturbing trends with respect to children, both as victims and users. First, the incel community is becoming more extreme with respect to sexual activity with children. In March 2022, the forum rules changed to permit sexualization of pubescent minors. Over a quarter of incel forum users have posted pedophilia keywords, and discussions of pedophilia show 53 percent of posters are supportive. CCDH also discovered children ages 15-17 using these sites – in fact, three they highlighted were prolific users of the site, one spending ten hours a day there.

Google Search is facilitating entry into the wider “incelosphere.” CCDH found that Google searches for terms connected with body image and unemployment present links to incelosphere sites on their first page of results, potentially introducing impressionable young men to a dangerous community. CCDH also found that the incel forum uses YouTube frequently to share content from incel YouTube channels, which have accumulated more than 24.2 million views. As of the date of this letter, one of these channels, “Incel TV,” is still up and running.

We find all of this to be unacceptable and dangerous. Major social media platforms and search engines that claim to value safety should follow through with action.

For this reason, we request your prompt response to the following questions:

- Why has YouTube not removed the incel-related channels identified in CCDH's report under YouTube's existing Community Guidelines against hate speech and harmful and dangerous content? Please provide an explanation for any enforcement decisions or lack thereof.
- Will Google commit to downranking the “feeder” forums that are driving people to “incelosphere” forums that CCDH identified in their search results, as well as the incel forum itself? If not, why not?
- Have your companies performed any assessment of the threat posed by the fact that your platforms recommend and serve incel and male-supremacist content to young users? Please provide details on the number of minors exposed to this content through your products and services.

² Laura Bates, *Men Who Hate Women* (2020).

- Please provide any additional information on the safety measures in place to prevent further platforming of extremism and violent male supremacist content on your platform and promotion through your search engine.

We appreciate your prompt and timely responses to these questions and encourage both Google and YouTube to consider additional steps they can take to address the growing and dangerous threat posed by the incel community. Thank you for your attention to this important topic.

Sincerely,



Adam Schiff
Member of Congress

Dick Durbin
Member of Congress

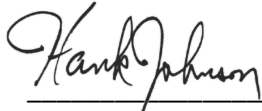
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