

May 23, 2016

Hon. John Thune, Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
512 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Thune:

We appreciated the opportunity to meet with you and your staff last week about the concerns raised in your letter to Facebook, Inc. (“Facebook”) CEO Mark Zuckerberg on May 10, 2016, and want to supplement those discussions with this written response. This letter highlights Facebook’s goals as a platform, the results of our investigation into allegations of political bias in the Trending Topics feature, and our plans for the future of the feature.

I. Overview

Facebook’s mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected. To serve that mission, we seek to operate a platform open to all ideas. In 12 years, the Facebook community has grown to include more than 1.6 billion people of every background and ideology—from conservative to liberal and everything in between. Maintaining and growing this global community depends on everyone on Facebook feeling comfortable sharing what is important to them. Our Trending Topics feature is a recent innovation designed to connect people to topics that people are talking about on Facebook. This is in addition to (and separate from) an individual’s News Feed, which is the central way that most people discover information and connect with others on Facebook.

Suppressing political content or preventing people from seeing what matters most to them is directly contrary to Facebook’s mission and our business objectives. When anonymous allegations of political bias recently surfaced in relation to Facebook’s Trending Topics feature, we immediately launched an investigation to determine if anyone violated the integrity of the feature or acted in ways that are inconsistent with Facebook’s policies and mission. We spoke with current reviewers and their supervisors, as well as a cross-section of former reviewers; spoke with our contractor; reviewed our guidelines, training, and practices; examined the effectiveness of operational oversight designed to identify and correct mistakes and abuse; and analyzed data on the implementation of our guidelines by reviewers.

Our investigation has revealed no evidence of systematic political bias in the selection or prominence of stories included in the Trending Topics feature. In fact, our analysis indicated that the rates of approval of conservative and liberal topics are virtually

identical in Trending Topics. Moreover, we were unable to substantiate any of the specific allegations of politically-motivated suppression of subjects or sources, as reported in the media. To the contrary, we confirmed that most of those subjects were in fact included as trending topics on multiple occasions, on dates and at intervals that would be expected given the volume of discussion around those topics on those dates.

At the same time, as you would expect with an inquiry of this nature, our investigation could not exclude the possibility of isolated improper actions or unintentional bias in the implementation of our guidelines or policies. As part of our commitment to continually improve our products and to minimize risks where human judgment is involved, we are making a number of changes:

- We have already updated terminology in our Guidelines and conducted refresher training for all reviewers that emphasized that content decisions may not be made on the basis of politics or ideology.
- We will institute additional controls and oversight around the review team, including robust escalation procedures.
- We will expand our Help Center content related to the Trending Topics feature to provide additional information about this feature.
- We will eliminate our reliance on external websites and news outlets to identify, validate, or assess the importance of trending topics. This means that we will discontinue use of the top-10 list of news outlets, the Media 1K list, and the RSS feed.

These improvements and safeguards are designed not only to ensure that Facebook remains a platform that is open and welcoming to all groups and individuals, but also to restore any loss of trust in the Trending Topics feature.

II. Trending Topics

Trending Topics helps people discover current content that is both popular in the world and meaningful to them.¹ It appears in the upper right corner of the Facebook website, or after tapping the search bar when viewing Facebook on a mobile device. The Trending Topics feature is separate from the News Feed, which is Facebook's central component and the primary information distribution channel with which Facebook users engage. The specific topics shown to any individual Facebook user are personalized by an algorithm, and Facebook also uses an algorithm to surface possible trends from the large quantity of content that is posted on Facebook and in headlines across the web. We currently use people to bridge the gap between what an algorithm can do today and what

¹ The Trending Topics feature was launched in January 2014. The product has existed in its current form (with periodic updates) from 2015 to the present, after Facebook's Search group took over the feature from Facebook's Public Content group. In July 2014, Facebook contracted with Accenture to hire a team to review the topics generated by the trending algorithm and generate a corresponding description with a short title, brief text, and categorization for relevance.

we hope it will be able to do in the future—to sort the meaningful trends from gibberish and duplicates, and to write headlines and descriptions in clear, natural-sounding language. This team operates in accordance with guidelines that limit their discretion and is not permitted to prioritize one viewpoint over another or suppress any political perspectives.

a. Identification of Trending Topics

To identify potential trending topics, Facebook’s automated systems use natural language processing to “read” Facebook posts and predict the topic of those posts. Those systems also look for hashtags. The trending algorithm is trying to detect unusual increases in the number of posts about a particular subject over time. When it detects that many more people may be posting about a particular subject now than were recently posting about that same subject, the algorithm adds the topic to a review queue of potential “trending” topics.

Since mid-2014, potential trending topics also could be identified and added to the review queue through an automated review of RSS feeds of headlines from top news sites, including a wide range of sources such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *National Journal*, RedState, Huffington Post, the Drudge Report, and many others.² This list of RSS feeds—which, as noted at the outset and described further below, we are discontinuing—was subject to periodic review and updating.

b. Trending Review Process

Potential trending topics are placed into a queue that is monitored and reviewed by people on the trending review team. While Facebook’s Trending Review Guidelines are designed to be as inclusive as possible—any topic that represents a unique real-world event should be accepted by the review team—as many as half of the topics that algorithms place into the queue need to be rejected because they do not make sense at the time or are duplicative.

If a topic is accepted, the reviewer writes a short description that follows the Guidelines, which describe the style in which these descriptions should be written and how information should be attributed. If a story appears in at least three sources from a list of over a thousand media entities (the “Media 1K” list), it may be described without attribution to any particular source.³

Temporary Removal of Topics (“Revisit,” formerly referred to as “Blacklisting”)

Reviewers may temporarily sideline topics to prevent junk hashtags from appearing as trending topics, to hold topics for which a unique real-world event cannot yet be identified, and to remove duplicates. All dismissed potential trends can return to

² A copy of this list is attached as Appendix A.

³ A copy of this list is attached as Appendix B.

the review queue between three and 24 hours later. They are therefore regularly checked by different members of the team for as long as they continue to be surfaced by the trending algorithm. The process of temporarily dismissing a topic from the queue used to be called “blacklisting,” but we have updated our terminology to “revisit” to better reflect the real nature of this action. Many trending topics are initially held in this way, because it often takes time to understand why a particular word or phrase is trending, and approximately half of topics that surface from the algorithm are temporarily removed from the queue at some point. Topics that have been sidelined are routinely accepted as trending topics subsequently, once adequate sources emerge validating the topic as a real-world, newsworthy event.

The Trending Review Guidelines limit the reasons topics can be sidelined to the following:

- **Not a unique real-world event:** This scenario occurs when there is no apparent connection to a unique event. An example would be “#lunch,” which spikes in popularity around noon every day but is not a news event.
- **Insufficient sources:** This occurs when a topic is connected to a real-world event but the available information is not sufficient to characterize the topic. For example, if all stories are in a foreign language, the team might be unable to determine the topic. A reviewer who believes additional sources may emerge to give context to a particular topic in the near future can set a short timer to trigger re-review.
- **Duplicate topic:** This scenario occurs when a topic is linked to a real-world event, but there is already a better topic to represent that event. For example, in the past the team has removed “Argentina/Paraguay” and accepted “#CopaAmerica” in its place.
- **Junk hashtags:** This occurs when hashtags are not linked to real-world events, such as “#candy” on Halloween.
- **Stale external topic:** This occurs when an event is over two days old and there have been no significant developments in the story.
- **Hoax sources:** This is rare, but can happen when the trending algorithm surfaces a topic traced to an unreliable or satirical source.⁴

Two-thirds of topics that are temporarily removed are identified as non-real-world events; the next most common reasons are duplicate topics or insufficient sources.

⁴ Sidelining a topic because it was surfaced from an “unreliable” website appears to have happened rarely, and our investigation did not reveal any explicit political bias that motivated or resulted from such decisions. Nonetheless, we believe that assessing whether a source is “unreliable” places more discretion in the hands of reviewer than we intended, and we will be eliminating this from the Guidelines.

If a topic is temporarily removed from the queue, members of the review team set a timer for revisiting the topic, usually for a period of approximately 24 hours but often shorter. After the timer expires, if the algorithm re-identifies the topic as “trending” or spiking in conversation, the review team will re-evaluate it to see if the topic meets our Guidelines’ criteria for approval, or if it should be sidelined again. In this way, a topic that is “revisited” due to insufficient sources—because, for example, coverage of the topic is just emerging—can and frequently is subsequently re-reviewed and accepted as a topic if and when additional verifying sources emerge.

Topic Correction (formerly referred to as “Injection”)

A reviewer may also need to use a topic correction tool to fix a topic that the algorithm has incorrectly identified, to consolidate related trending stories, or to clarify a topic’s subject. Reviewers may not use this tool to introduce or promote articles or topics from a particular perspective, nor may they use it to create topics without underlying stories to support inclusion.

For example, in April 2015, the topic “Thoroughbred Horse Racing” surfaced in connection with the Kentucky Derby. This topic was corrected to the topic “Kentucky Derby.”

Today, the topic correction tool is rarely used. Over time, we have made adjustments to the trending algorithm so that it selects more accurate topic names, reducing the need for and incidence of manual topic correction. Further, if the topic name is still not quite right, our reviewers now can simply assign custom topic names, tailoring them to specific stories, rather than needing to replace the topic with another topic tag that already existed in our system.

Topic Prominence (formerly referred to as “Boosting”)

As the Trending Topics feature is currently constructed, particular topics also may be “boosted” to better reflect the prominence of widely-reported topics. Reviewers historically have referred to the following list of sources to determine if a topic should be boosted: BBC News, CNN, Fox News, *The Guardian*, NBC News, *The New York Times*, *USA TODAY*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, and BuzzFeed News. As noted above, use of this list is being discontinued. If the topic is leading coverage on five of these ten sources, it would be marked as “national.” If the topic is leading coverage on ten sites, it would be marked as “major.”

If a topic receives a “national” boost, it would be slightly more likely to show up in a user’s trending suggestions, and a “major” boost would give a somewhat stronger preference to the topic. In neither case, however, would the “boost” override the user’s individual preferences (e.g., for sports or celebrity news) that the algorithm detects based on the user’s previous Trending Topics activity or other site activity that serves as the primary determinant for what the user sees.

Events of unusually high importance would receive an even stronger boost; this third category in its current form has been used only for the Paris and Brussels terror

attacks. A topic that receives this type boost is much more likely to show up in an individual user's Trending Topics feature, but still is not guaranteed to do so.

As noted at the outset and described further below, we plan to eliminate this boosting function and, as a result, our reliance on the list of news sources currently used to implement it.

c. Trending Review Team

The trending review team contractors are hired and supervised by Accenture, which also supplies supervisors. The Accenture supervisors report to full-time Facebook employees.

Each reviewer receives initial training attended by a Facebook employee that includes a detailed review of the Trending Review Guidelines. Following their formal training, new hires shadow other members of the team to receive additional on-the-job training. Throughout the course of their employment, employees receive ongoing guidance and direction from team leads and one-on-one guidance as necessary.

Multiple layers of review exist to maintain quality and identify reviewer mistakes. Experienced members of the review team serve as copy editors to review the work of individual reviewers, edit copy, fix errors, respond to internal feedback in real time, and monitor and document issues for escalation. Accenture "team leads" maintain editorial guidelines, conduct trainings, track errors on an ongoing basis, and address quality-of-work issues with individual reviewers. Full-time Facebook employees oversee the work of the review team, set and adjust editorial guidelines, participate in some training sessions led by Accenture, and meet weekly with Accenture team leads to discuss editorial quality and consistency. In addition, members of the Facebook community may report potential issues with Trending Topics through our website.

Finally, there are procedures in place to continuously monitor review team work product and identify areas for improvement.

III. Investigation into Current Allegations

On May 9, 2016, an online article citing anonymous sources raised allegations regarding potential bias in the Trending Topics review process. We took these allegations very seriously because they go to the heart of our mission, and we formed a cross-functional investigation team under my supervision to conduct a thorough inquiry.

a. Investigative Steps

To investigate allegations of bias or reviewer misconduct regarding specific topics, we carefully reviewed data logs recording more than 600 reviewer decisions involving the specific topics surfaced in the media. We sought to determine whether topics relating to real-world news events had been improperly removed by searching contemporaneous news reports to determine if real-world events regarding those topics occurred on the dates of reviewer decisions to temporarily remove a topic. We reviewed

and analyzed other topic approvals and corrections on the dates of decisions to temporarily remove a topic to determine whether the topic was removed because it duplicated an approved topic. We also reviewed a selection of communications between reviewers involved in decisions to temporarily sideline the topics at issue to identify any evidence of political bias or reviewer misconduct.

We also conducted interviews with product and engineering teams to understand the end-to-end structure and design of the Trending Topics feature. We then spoke with the Facebook employees responsible for supervising review team contractors, and interviewed each of the current reviewers and each of the current copy editors. We also reached out to and interviewed a cross-section of former reviewers who are no longer working on the Trending Topics review team.

b. Results of Investigation

During the interview process, each of the current and former reviewers with whom we spoke confirmed that they are not aware of any ideological bias in the review process, and the Facebook employees supervising the team were similarly unaware of any evidence of political bias and confirmed that no such allegations had been raised to the team previously.

Our examination of the data logs, analysis of contemporaneous news reporting, and review of other records regarding recent allegations found no evidence of systematic political bias. The investigation did reveal that—prior to July 2015—reviewers followed guidance that did not permit the acceptance of a topic if one of the first 12 posts (the “feed”) associated with that topic did not include a post from a news organization, a primary source, or a verified profile or page. This guidance may have in some instances prior to that date prevented or delayed acceptance of topics that were not covered by major news organizations.

With respect to specific allegations surfaced in the media, our investigation concluded:

- *Republican Political Figures.* These allegations included a claim that topics involving Republican political figures Ted Cruz, Rand Paul, Mitt Romney, and Scott Walker were suppressed by reviewers because of political bias. Our investigation did not substantiate this allegation. To the contrary, topics related to each figure were accepted as trending topics on dozens of occasions. Ted Cruz was accepted as a trending topic more than 160 times; Rand Paul was accepted on 50 occasions; Mitt Romney was accepted more than 40 times; and Scott Walker was accepted as a trending topic nearly three dozen times. In fact, the two most frequently accepted topics since early 2015 are presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and #GOPDebate.
- *Chris Kyle.* Twenty-seven topics related to the late Navy SEAL who was portrayed in the film “American Sniper” were approved by reviewers. The headlines for those topics included “Widow of Navy SEAL Pens Open Letter to

Late Husband on 13th Wedding Anniversary,” “Late Navy SEAL’s Father Discusses Tragedy of Son’s Murder,” “Feb. 2 Marks Date Retired US Navy SEAL Was Killed in 2013,” and “April 8 Marks Birthday of Late Navy SEAL Portrayed in American Sniper Film.” We did not substantiate the allegation that any topic related to Mr. Kyle was suppressed because of political bias.

- Conservative Political Action Conference. Facebook reviewers accepted topics related to both the 2015 and 2016 Conservative Political Action Conference (“CPAC”). In 2015, those topics included the kick-off of each of the three days of CPAC, as well as a speech given by Duck Dynasty star Phil Robertson and Senator Rand Paul’s straw poll victory. In 2016, although topics related to CPAC were accepted on other days of the conference, one topic related to CPAC itself was not accepted on its first day, March 2, 2016. Our investigation concluded that this decision was likely the result of the fact that on that day—the day after the Super Tuesday electoral contests—reviewers accepted at least 15 topics related to the Republican presidential primary. Two of the most popular CPAC stories in the news that day related to criticisms by aides to Senator Marco Rubio regarding Donald Trump’s scheduled CPAC speech and Ben Carson’s announcement that he would not attend CPAC because he was dropping out of the race. Each of these CPAC-related stories was likely subsumed within broader topics—including Donald Trump, Marco Rubio, and Ben Carson—that were accepted by reviewers the same day. Given the history of acceptance of CPAC as a topic in 2015 and on most days in 2016, we do not believe any bias can be inferred.
- Lois Lerner. Reviewers accepted topics related to former IRS official Lois Lerner on at least 15 occasions. The headlines for those topics included, “Criminal Investigation Underway After Recovery of Ex-IRS Official’s Emails,” “Thousands of IRS Official’s Missing Emails Found, Investigators Say,” and “IRS Confirms Existence of 2nd Personal Email Account Belonging to Former Director.” Based on our review, we believe it is likely that some topics regarding Ms. Lerner were not accepted because they were duplicative of topics accepted on the same day, such as “Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah) Asks President Obama to Remove IRS Commissioner.” In addition, some surfaced topics involving Ms. Lerner likely were not accepted because they had “gone stale.” Under reviewer guidelines, topics were not to be approved if two days had passed with no significant developments regarding the topic. We could not reconstruct reliable data logs from before December 2014, so were unable to examine each of the reviewer decisions from that period.
- Glenn Beck. The algorithm surfaced and reviewers accepted “Glenn Beck” as a trending topic at least four times. These trending topics appeared as “Glenn Beck: Radio Host Says Americans Need to Prepare for All Out War in the Wake of Instability in Iraq,” “Glenn Beck: Radio Host Says Donald Trump Winning Presidential Nomination Would Be End of GOP,” “Glenn Beck: Conservative TV and Radio Personality Endorses Ted Cruz for President,” and “Glenn Beck: Conservative Radio Personality Criticizes Drudge Report Founder Matt Drudge.”

We also identified four headlines relating to Mr. Beck that did not include his name as the topic. For example, on August 29, 2015, Mr. Beck participated in the “All Lives Matter” march in Birmingham, Alabama, which was accepted by reviewers under the topic “All Lives Matter.” On other occasions, the algorithm surfaced Mr. Beck’s name but the reviewers did not accept the topic. Based on our interviews and contemporaneous news reports, the most likely explanation for these decisions is that Mr. Beck’s name surfaced because he had commented on a real-world news event, and the event itself—rather than Mr. Beck—was accepted as the trending topic. We identified one instance in February 2015 when Mr. Beck made remarks about vaccines in which a reviewer temporarily removed a topic related to Mr. Beck from the queue because of “feed quality”—that is, whether the posts that a person would be likely to see if they clicked on the topic included posts from a primary source, a news organization, or a verified profile or page—but another reviewer later restored the topic to the queue upon determining that the feed quality had improved.

- *The Drudge Report.* The Drudge Report or its founder, Matt Drudge, were surfaced by the algorithm and accepted as a trending topic on at least 11 occasions. On other occasions, the algorithm surfaced the Drudge Report’s name but the reviewers did not accept the topic. As with Mr. Beck, the most likely explanation for these decisions is that the Drudge Report or Mr. Drudge surfaced because the Drudge Report had linked to a real-world news event, and the event itself—rather than the site linking to it—was accepted as a topic. For example, in September 2015, the Drudge Report linked to a story regarding an ex-Nobel committee member who regretted giving President Obama the Nobel Peace Prize. Shortly thereafter, the review team removed the topic “Drudge Report,” but approved the headline, “Ex-Secretary of Nobel Commission Says He Regrets Barack Obama’s Award.” Similarly, in December 2015, the Drudge Report linked to a story regarding a helicopter taking photos in Michigan. The same day, the review team removed the topic “Drudge Report,” but approved the headline, “County Sheriff Claims Helicopter Over Area Belongs to Homeland Security.”
- *Steven Crowder.* Our investigation determined that comedian Steven Crowder’s name was surfaced by Facebook’s algorithm, but was not accepted as a trending topic by reviewers. We found no evidence that the decision to remove his name as a topic was the result of any political bias. For example, in April 2015, the algorithm surfaced Mr. Crowder as a topic when he posted a hidden camera video in which he sought to purchase a cake for a same-sex wedding at a Muslim-owned bakery. Rather than suppressing the video because of its political message, internal communications show that a reviewer flagged the topic for fellow reviewers as “news we need,” noting that the topic could not yet be accepted because the “feed” was not “really quite there yet.” The reviewer expressed concern that “one article ... says the video is months old,” calling into question whether it was in fact related to a timely real-world news event.

In sum, our investigation did not substantiate allegations that reviewers systematically engaged in politically-motivated suppression of conservative news stories.

Consistent with the guidelines, reviewers did not accept surfaced topics that were unrelated to unique real-world news events or were duplicative of other related topics that were already trending. In some cases before July 2015, surfaced topics on these subjects were not accepted because of poor “feed quality,” which at the time meant that the first 12 posts most likely to be returned as results if a user clicked on the topic did not include a post from a news organization, a primary source, or a verified profile or page.

This guidance, which may have prevented or delayed the acceptance of topics that were not covered by mainstream news organizations, was updated in July 2015 to permit reviewers to accept topics even if those topics were not being covered by major news organizations or verified pages or profiles.

Our investigation also reviewed specific allegations related to the injection of certain topics (i.e., topic correction). We concluded that the injection tool, which is rarely used today, was used more frequently in the past to address limitations of the Trending Topics product. Specifically:

- On various occasions in 2014 and 2015, the topic “Malaysia Airlines Flight MH 370” was used to replace incorrect topic IDs associated with the event that were detected algorithmically. For instance, the topic “Western Australia” began trending when a towelette from the airline was found in Australia; reviewers corrected the topic title to refer to “Malaysia Airlines Flight MH 370.”
- The reconstructed data logs dating back to December 2014 show that the topics “Black Lives Matter,” “BLM,” “#blacklivesmatter,” and “#BLM” were never injected. In the course of our continued investigation, we did learn that the related topic “Ferguson”—referring to the shooting of Ferguson, Missouri teenager Michael Brown—was added to compensate for an error in Facebook’s algorithm at the time that did not properly surface topics that remained at a very high volume of discussion for sustained periods.
- In January 2015, the topic “Charlie Hebdo,” the newspaper that was the target of a terrorist attack, was added to replace less descriptive topics, such as “Vincennes,” a reference to a particular location in Paris.

We found no evidence that the injection tool was used to advance any particular political agenda. Over time, adjustments to the trending algorithm have dramatically reduced the need for its use, and, as noted, it is rarely used today.

In addition to our investigation of specific allegations, we conducted a broader analysis of data regarding reviewer actions in the Trending Topics feature to study whether there is any evidence of systematic bias of the “blacklist” and “boosting” tools to favor liberal topics over conservative topics.⁵ That analysis—which looked at more than

⁵ This analysis looked at all topics reviewed by Trending Topics reviewers over the past 90 days. Topics were assigned political designations based on individuals who posted content about these topics and self-declared a political affiliation in their Facebook profiles.

3,000 reviewer decisions—found no such bias. In fact, rates of “boosting,” “blacklisting,” and accepting topics have been virtually identical for liberal and conservative topics. The only clear trend revealed by the analysis was that moderate topics—that is, those that are popular across the political spectrum—are approved and boosted at a higher rate than liberal or conservative topics.

Despite the findings of our investigation, it is impossible to fully exclude the possibility that, over the years of the feature’s existence, a specific reviewer took isolated actions with an improper motive. As described above, there are multiple layers of review in place to detect and respond to such actions. Moreover, reviewers do not select or control the topics that the algorithm generates for their review, and their discretion is further limited by the requirement to abide by rigorous guidelines. Should we learn of evidence of improper actions taken on the basis of political bias, we will take prompt remedial actions.

IV. Commitment to Reforms and Improvements

While our investigation revealed no systematic political bias, we are keenly aware of the responsibility that we have to our community of users and the high level of public interest in our products. Our goal is to create a community that bridges divides, gives all people a voice, and fosters the free flow of ideas and culture. To achieve that objective, Facebook must be a platform that is open to all groups and individuals, and anything that limits engagement by particular groups—or even is perceived to limit engagement by particular groups—represents a shortcoming.

Thus, as part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining high standards and improving our products, we are instituting changes to further protect the Trending Topics feature from potential misuse or the effects of unintentional political bias. Here are some of the things we are doing:

- We have already updated terminology in our Guidelines and conducted refresher training for all reviewers that emphasized that content decisions may not be made on the basis of politics or ideology.
- We will institute additional controls and oversight around the review team, including robust escalation procedures.
- We will expand our Help Center content related to the Trending Topics feature to provide additional information about this feature.
- We will eliminate our reliance on external websites and news outlets to identify, validate, or assess the importance of trending topics. This means that we will discontinue use of the top-10 list of news outlets, the Media 1K list, and the RSS feed.

We also reached out to our contractor Accenture to remind them of our policies and to request that they promptly elevate to us any allegations or evidence of prioritizing one viewpoint over another or the suppression of political perspectives.

Finally, last week our CEO also met with a group of conservative journalists and thought leaders to gather their feedback about what Facebook can do to better meet the needs of its users from the entire political spectrum. We look forward to continuing that dialogue.

V. Conclusion

We are proud of the platform and community we have created, and we hope that Facebook continues to be a place for robust and meaningful dialogue between and among groups and individuals of all backgrounds and political leanings. Diversity in all its forms—including ideological—is one of our core values, and we believe that adding voices to the conversation creates a richer and more vibrant community. We want people to feel confident that our community welcomes all viewpoints and we are committed to designing our products to give all people a voice and foster the free flow of ideas and culture.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Colin Stretch
General Counsel
Facebook, Inc.

cc: Hon. Bill Nelson, Ranking Minority Member