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October 26, 2018

Mr. Jack Dorsey  
Co-founder and CEO  
Twitter, Inc.  
1355 Market St., Ste. 900  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Dorsey,

I am writing to follow up on our dialogue during the House Energy and Commerce Committee's September 5, 2018 hearing: "Twitter: Transparency and Accountability."<sup>1</sup> As you will recall, I inquired about Twitter's response to media reports stating that Periscope, Twitter's live video broadcast app, is being used to sexually exploit children.<sup>2</sup> Reports indicate children as young as nine years old are targeted for exploitation through Periscope broadcasts.<sup>3</sup> I commend Twitter's stated zero tolerance policy for sexual exploitation of children and your efforts to make Twitter a safer online platform. I am now seeking answers to better understand Twitter's policies and how we can make Twitter a safer online environment in our shared responsibility to protect children.

At the hearing, you stated that Twitter's response time to remove a live Periscope video "depends entirely on the severity of the [user] report and what the context is."<sup>4</sup> You concluded the current reporting method for monitoring a live Periscope broadcast is ineffective "over the long term."<sup>5</sup> While I appreciate Twitter is developing more effective enforcement tools, I am concerned children remain at risk since Twitter has "some dependency on reports."<sup>6</sup>

I also expressed serious concerns that Twitter has even less effective tools to prevent the sexual exploitation of children through private Periscope broadcasts. You acknowledged Twitter

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<sup>1</sup> *Twitter: Transparency and Accountability*, Before the H. Comm. on Energy and Commerce, 115<sup>th</sup> Cong. (2018) [hereinafter *Twitter*].

<sup>2</sup> See Glaser, April (December 12, 2017) "*Periscope Has a Minor Problem*" SLATE. [http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/technology/2017/12/periscope\\_users\\_are\\_asking\\_young\\_girls\\_to\\_do\\_sexually\\_explicit\\_things\\_and.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/technology/2017/12/periscope_users_are_asking_young_girls_to_do_sexually_explicit_things_and.html). See also Menegus, Bryan (December 15, 2017) "*Users Looking for Child Pornography are Gathering on Periscope, Twitter's Forgotten Video Service*" GIZMODO. <https://gizmodo.com/users-looking-for-child-pornography-are-gathering-on-pe-1821290878>.

<sup>3</sup> See BBC News "*Young Children groomed on live streaming app Periscope*" (July 22, 2017) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8w0rgf9\\_WI8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8w0rgf9_WI8)

<sup>4</sup> *Twitter*, *supra* note 1 (prelim. transcript p.203).

<sup>5</sup> *Twitter*, *supra* note 1 (prelim. transcript p.204).

<sup>6</sup> *Twitter*, *supra* note 1 (prelim. transcript p.203).

“need[s] to do much more work ... in terms of automating ...” the monitoring of private Periscope broadcasts. Lastly, you also stated, “[w]e’d like to work as quickly as possible . . .” to develop these tools.

As such, I would appreciate your response to the following specific questions regarding Periscope broadcasts:

- 1) How many live Periscope broadcasts, saved broadcasts, or summaries or links to broadcasts has Twitter removed from the Periscope app for sexual exploitation of children, or a related reason, since Periscope launched in 2015?
  - a. How many has Twitter removed from the Twitter platform or app for sexual exploitation of children, or a related reason, since Periscope launched in 2015?
- 2) Of the live Periscope broadcasts, saved broadcasts, or summaries or links to broadcasts Twitter removed for sexual exploitation of children, or a related reason, how many were private Periscope broadcasts?
- 3) Is there an increased risk for the sexual exploitation of children in private Periscope broadcasts due to the lack of user reporting in such a non-public forum?
- 4) How does Twitter currently seek to prevent the sexual exploitation of children through private Periscope broadcasts?
- 5) Can you explain in detail how automation and machine learning<sup>7</sup> will enhance enforcement capabilities, particularly for private Periscope broadcasts?
- 6) Can you provide a more specific period for implementing improvements to Periscope monitoring efforts?
- 7) How many Periscope app accounts have been suspended or deleted for promoting or broadcasting child sexual exploitation, since Periscope launched in 2015?
- 8) How many Twitter user accounts have been suspended or deleted for promoting or broadcasting child sexual exploitation through the Periscope app since 2015?
- 9) What is the average length of a Periscope broadcast?
- 10) What is the average time to remove a Periscope broadcast once a Twitter employee reviews a user report of child sexual exploitation?

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<sup>7</sup> *Twitter, supra* note 1 (prelim. transcript p.205).

- 11) What policies and procedures does Twitter have in place to disable the ability to use the Periscope search function for the promotion and broadcast of child sexual exploitation? If yes, please outline in detail those policies and procedures. If no, does Twitter plan on implementing such measures and when?
- 12) What policies and procedures does Twitter have in place to report to Federal, State or international law enforcement information Twitter receives indicating an individual or organization is engaged in promoting or broadcasting child sexual exploitation?
- 13) Has Twitter established a 24/7 point of contact with whom Federal, State or international law enforcement can communicate directly if law enforcement has information indicating that an individual or organization is engaged in promoting or broadcasting child sexual exploitation? If you have, please outline in detail what person or department is responsible, and provide their contact information. If you have not, is Twitter planning on implementing such measures and when?
- 14) Based on responses to these previous questions, are Twitter's current procedures adequate to prevent the sexual exploitation of children on Periscope?

Thank you for your attention to the important subject of protecting children from sexual exploitation on social media platforms. I look forward to your response by November 19, 2018.

Sincerely,



Mimi Walters  
Member of Congress