

U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell

Opening Statement at Senate Commerce Committee Executive Session

October 1, 2020

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and thank you for this morning's discussion.

I actually can't wait to ask Mr. Zuckerberg further questions. I'm so proud that when we had a hearing before with Mr. Zuckerberg, I asked him an infamous question that's now part of a movie: "What was their interference in the last elections?" At which point, the woman who is a whistleblower inside the organization says to the camera, "He's lying." So, can't wait to have Mr. Zuckerberg here again.

I think the issues that we are discussing of how we function in an information age are of extreme importance. I think the issue of privacy and also media domination by the platforms when they put their foot on the throats of local news media is also an issue. So I appreciate the Chairman's offer today of adding to the subpoena language both privacy and media as a discussion point we can bring up in the subpoenas.

What I don't want to see is a chilling effect on individuals who are in a process of trying to crack down on hate speech or misinformation about COVID during a pandemic. Part of this discussion will end up being about the fact that some of these social platforms have tried to move forward in a positive way and take down information that is incorrect.

I welcome the debate about 230. I think it should be a long and thoughtful process, not sure that a long and thoughtful process will happen before the election, but I understand my colleagues' desires here today. So, happy to move forward on these subpoenas with the additions that the Chairman so graciously added. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.