Dear Congress,

We are teens and young adults across the U.S. As members of Generation Z (Gen-Z), we have known no other world than one dominated by social media, the internet, and Big Tech. None of us can imagine living without the tech created by companies like Apple, Google, Facebook, and Amazon. The costs, however, are our mental health, privacy, and safety. These companies have too much power over our personal data, security, and our daily lives - not to mention the harm they cause to our news environment, democracy and society at large.

As Gen-Z, we’ve seen and lived the harms and dangers presented by Big Tech companies. The harmful effects of algorithmically-fueled, unchecked, and revenue-generating content has forced us to grow up in a world where cyberbullying, disordered eating content and mass polarization are what we come to expect online. But it doesn’t have to be this way, and we refuse to accept this as the norm.

Two bipartisan bills now under consideration in Congress — the Kids Online Safety Act (S.3663, or KOSA) and the American Innovation and Choice Online Act (S.2992, or AICOA) — can positively transform the digital landscape for young people. As a generation that has faced tremendous challenges and hardship from Big Tech’s abuses of their monopoly power, we demand change. We deserve a safer and more competitive internet.

KOSA will help protect young and vulnerable online users from many of the psychological dangers engineered into social media and other internet platforms. We should be able to opt out of algorithmic recommendations and other addictive features. Mandated privacy protections and greater transparency afforded by third-party audits will protect us from some of the most manipulative marketing tactics used by these giant companies, enabling us to enjoy the benefits of digital channels with fewer of the risks and downsides.

Legislation like this is particularly important because Big Tech companies have made clear that they will put profit before young people’s wellbeing. Even when their own employees report dangerous or illegal activity being conducted over their own channels, the companies delay taking action, demonstrating the need for external oversight and regulation.

Big Tech is stifling competition to the detriment of entrepreneurs, small business owners, and consumers - including our generation as we enter the workforce. Passing AICOA will begin to change that. It will require Big Tech to operate fairly, without preferencing their own products. And it will prohibit them from using information they collect from us to create a market advantage as they try to sell us more products.

These bills have broad, bipartisan support. But time is short. We urge you to take every measure to enact these bills into law before the end of this current Congress. Gen-Z showed up at the ballot box. It’s time for Congress to step up and rein in the unchecked power of Big Tech monopolies undermining the well-being of our generation.

Sincerely,

Ahmed O
Aileen R
Ailey K
Aimee K
Aliza K
Ally P
Alyon L
Anastasia D
Andrew B
Anyara M
April U
Ash S
Callie R
Carmen T
Carrsten S
Cassie R
Cato H
Champagne T
Chase H
Chuying H
Corey H
Cornelia S
Danielle B
Danni S
Darren L
Evelina P
Dillon B
Dionna M
Eamon S
Edward T
Elena H
Elise J
Ella C
Ello R
Emilie B
Emilia A
Francesca L
Gabriel A
Gabi K
Grace B
Harriett C
Heidi D
Hope N
Iris W
Isabel S
Jasmine P
Jack P
Jacqueline M
Jake F
James Z
Jennifer M
Jhamar Y
Josey D
John D
Jonathan A
Joseph Z
Josh T
Juang D
Julie T
Julia K
Julia H
Justin M
Kari Lynn R
Kathryn L
Lauren W
Larissa M
Lauren P
Lee D
Leila T
Lily A
Lucas W
Lorelle L
Lucilla U
Lynna J
Maddie F
Mai Thi T
Makayla K
Matthew S
Melvin J
Michaela E
Mohit M
Najman M
Nancy K
Naomi F
Noah C
Nikhil P
Noah L
Nuramet K
Olivia D
Patscal B
Penelope C
Prigo S
Ramussen R
Rebecca R
Rick J
Rohan B
Roman M
Ryann E
Ryan D
Sahana K
Sam S
Sarina D
Sean S
Shaw J
Sharon L
Shea Balbino N
Shek N
Shruti D
Shwey A
Simone S
Siya S
Sophia K
Sumarath R
Suneela L
Tanner G
Tanvir K
Taslim K
Terran L
Thang D
Tien Z
Tom S
Vivaya S
William H
Yaelle C
Zahrin Q
Zemanaa Q
Zhamila B
Zoe J

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