

August 6, 2018

Federal Trade Commission
Office of the Secretary
600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Suite CC-5610 (Annex C)
Washington, DC 20580

Re: Competition and Consumer Protection in the 21st
Century Hearing, Project Number P181201

It seems that every day there are new reports of data breaches and private information "accidentally" becoming public, and this concerns me. Our data is being collected by big companies without our consent and without us knowing how it will be used. Based on the number of robo calls I get, and calls from people soliciting me about insurance, mortgages, and vehicle warranty extensions, it is obviously being sold and resold. It is unsettling that companies like Google, Facebook, and Amazon are harvesting and selling my data. That data is mine and it should be up to me how it is shared, and with whom.

Because of Google's size, it believes it can take liberties, such as altering search results to highlight other Google products. It was recently fined billions of dollars by the EU because it used its smartphone dominance to keep out competitors. Competition has historically been good for consumers by lowering prices and giving consumers more choices, but these big companies are squeezing out competitors, forcing consumers to use their products and accept their terms. However, the terms are never made clear to the consumers, who really don't have a choice anyway. I don't like the idea that Google has been tracking android users' locations. I know it seems like that is how things are going nowadays, but when it is done without my knowledge and consent, it is an invasion of my privacy.

I am concerned that Facebook, too, has been censoring users with certain points of view. It is wrong, and it means that we won't get the full picture about a subject; we will only receive one side of an argument. Google, Facebook, and Amazon are major digital players, who are abusing their positions. Because of their marketplace dominance, it can be hard for some people to find alternatives. Personally, other than some shopping online, I could probably avoid all three, but I shouldn't have to. The Federal Trade Commission needs to step in and work to protect our private online data.

We keep talking about "data," but that data is a person. It is me and my information. Someone should not be making money off of me without my consent. I would like to see my info handled as my property, and I should be notified before it is sold to anyone.

Sincerely,



ERIC BELLAMY