



April 22, 2019

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chair
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Ranking Member
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
Chair, Subcommittee on Consumer
Protection & Commerce
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Consumer
Protection & Commerce
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Pallone, Walden, Schakowsky, and McMorris Rodgers:

I write to urge your support of comprehensive federal privacy legislation that applies to all businesses, including all entities collecting personal data within the online ecosystem. This law should have a consistent framework across the country. With Asian Americans playing a significant role in the growing digital economy, we are especially concerned about our communities becoming vulnerable to having their personal data divulged without adequate protections and trust in the digital space.

Asian Americans are often seen as digital pioneers given their early and rapid adoption of evolving technology and leadership within the technology industry. At the same time, others in our community experience some of the same challenges as vulnerable populations in other underrepresented communities: limited access to broadband, limited digital literacy, and limited access to computer science education. What often sets us apart in civil rights advocacy is the significant ethnic diversities within our community and the accompanying diversity of language. While there are still Asian American communities that lack access to affordable home broadband connections, in the aggregate our communities over-index as high adopters of new technology and consequently have become influential and knowledgeable participants in the online space and of great interest to companies that rely on a digital medium.

As the House considers federal legislation to set a benchmark for online privacy and data collection practices, we urge legislators to consider the needs of individuals with Limited English Proficiency. One key way to address this issue is to develop a strong, single standard that eliminates the need for states to develop their own solutions. A single standard empowers Asian American advocates and educators to more readily provide in-language information and services relevant to the online privacy needs of our constituencies.

For a community as diverse as the Asian American community—in terms of digital engagement based on language proficiency, income and education level—a baseline treatment of all entities is necessary. Such treatment ensures that Asian American consumers can trust that data about them will be used, stored, and shared in ways that match their expectations of the online experience and the circumstances in which the data was collected. Asian American consumers should have this trust regardless of how or by whom the data is collected or how it is used.

For all these reasons, we ask that you consider moving swiftly on developing comprehensive privacy legislation that is inclusive in nature and consistent in application. As you move forward on this process, Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC stands ready to assist you in crafting language to address other key areas of concern to our communities. Thank you for your leadership and we look forward to partnering with you to move this forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John C. Yang", written in a cursive style.

John C. Yang | President and Executive Director