

**Opening Statement of FTC Commissioner Julie Brill
U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee**

information is collected and used for purposes outside the context of their online transactions. In some cases, consumers avoid companies that they do not believe they can trust with their personal information.³ But in many cases, consumers do not really know what these non-consumer facing companies do with their data, what choices consumers may have about this data use, and what protections are in place for consumers' privacy interests.

In our policy work, the FTC has developed best practices and recommendations regarding how companies can be transparent about their practices and

household names, such as Google and Facebook.⁹ But we have also brought myriad cases against less well-known companies, alleging that they spammed consumers,¹⁰ violated commitments in their privacy policies,¹¹ installed spyware on consumers' computers,¹² or otherwise crossed the lines of deception or unfairness in their data

lapses can leave our children exposed in alarming ways.¹⁷ And inadequate security in one link can weaken the security in the whole chain of software and hardware in our devices and apps.¹⁸

The technologies that consumers use to shop, chat, and work online are undoubtedly complex and rapidly changing. However, we also know that it is more effective for companies to protect consumer information through reasonable policies and procedures that span the entire product lifecycle, rather than waiting until after a breach. As more and more devices become

As our past work and our planned initiatives for the coming year show, the FTC has a strong record of identifying emerging privacy and data security issues, collecting input from all stakeholders representing a variety of perspectives, and proceeding carefully to develop recommendations for policymakers and best practices for industry and consumers.

I look forward to discussing these issues with this working group today, and with you and your colleagues, industry, civil society, academics and consumer groups in the coming months.