

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

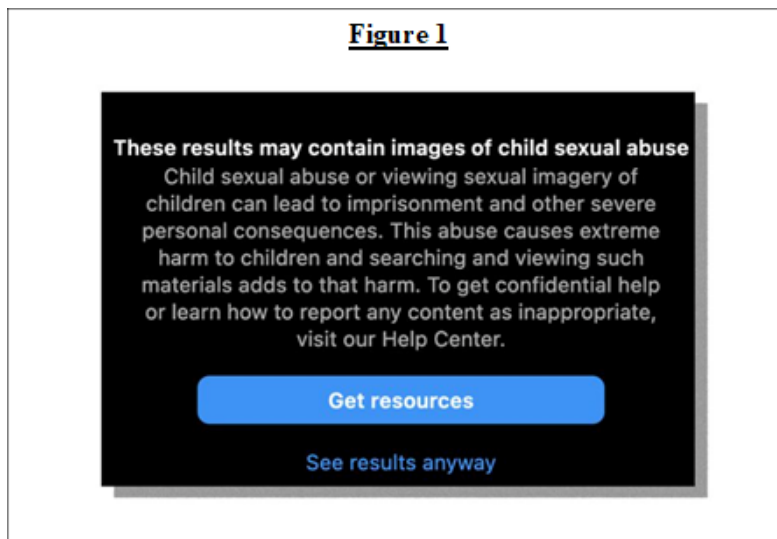
February 12, 2024

Mr. Mark Zuckerberg
Chief Executive Officer
Meta
1601 Willow Road
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Re: Congressional Testimony on Instagram’s CSAM Warning Screen

Dear Mr. Zuckerberg:

On January 31, 2024, you testified under oath before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee about the safety of children on Meta’s platforms. During that testimony, you were questioned about a seemingly now-defunct product feature on Instagram that displayed a warning screen to users who might be searching for child sexual abuse material (CSAM) on the platform. That interstitial, reproduced below, warned users that search “results may contain images of child sexual abuse” and allowed users to select between “Get resources” or “See results anyway.”



As you know, the *Wall Street Journal* reported the presence of this warning screen on June 7, 2023, after it was included in a report¹ published the previous day by researchers at the Stanford Internet Observatory. The *Journal* further reported that, in response to its questions, “Instagram

¹ Theil, David; DiResta, Renee; and Stamos, Alex, “Cross-Platform Dynamics of Self-Generated CSAM,” Stanford Internet Observatory, June 6, 2023, <https://cyber.fsi.stanford.edu/publication/cross-platform-dynamics-self-generated-csam>.

removed the option for users to view search results for terms likely to produce illegal images. The company declined to say why it had offered the option.”²

During your testimony on January 31, 2024, Senator Cruz pressed you for details on Instagram’s CSAM warning screen:

CRUZ: Let me ask you how many times was this warning screen displayed?

ZUCKERBERG: I don’t know. But the – but these – if there’s – if there’s –

CRUZ: You don’t know. Why don’t you know?

ZUCKERBERG: I – I don’t know the answer to that off the top of my head. But –

CRUZ: Well, you know what, Mr. Zuckerberg? It’s interesting you say you don’t know it off the top of your head, because I asked it in June of 2023 in an [...] oversight letter, and your company refused to answer. Will you commit right now to within five days answering this question for this committee?

ZUCKERBERG: We’ll follow up on that.

CRUZ: Is that a yes? Not a we’ll follow up. I know how lawyers write statements saying we’re not going to answer. Will you tell us how many times this warning screen was displayed, yes or no?

ZUCKERBERG: Senator I’ll personally look into it. I’m not sure if we have [Off mic].

CRUZ: OK. So, you’re refusing to answer that. Let me ask you this. How many times did – an Instagram user who got this warning, that you’re seeing images of child sexual abuse, how many times did that user click on see results anyway, I want to see that?

ZUCKERBERG: Senator, I’m not sure if we stored that. But I’ll personally look into this and will follow up after.

We write to follow up on your commitment to “personally look into” Senator Cruz’s questions regarding how often the CSAM warning screen was displayed and the number of times that users presented with the screen clicked “See results anyway.”

Please provide responses to the following requests for information no later than February 23, 2024.

1. Provide the dates during which Instagram’s CSAM warning screen was displayed to users.

² Horowitz, Jeff and Blunt, Katherine, “Instagram Connects Vast Pedophile Network,” *The Wall Street Journal*, June 7, 2023, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/instagram-vast-pedophile-network-4ab7189>.

2. For the period described in Question 1, how many unique times was the warning screen displayed?
3. For the period described in Question 1, how many unique times did a user click “See results anyway” when presented with the warning screen?
 - a. For users that selected “See results anyway,” did Meta take any further action, such as investigating whether the users were actively searching for CSAM material on Instagram or direct messaging minors?
 - b. How many accounts belonging to minors were accessed after a user clicked “See results anyway”?
4. Provide the full list of search terms that received the warning screen.
 - a. If the warning screen was triggered using a RegEx, provide a list of all terms on the RegEx list and a detailed explanation for how those terms were selected.
 - b. If the warning screen was triggered using content classification of search results, provide an explanation of how search results were classified and at what threshold(s) the warning screen was surfaced.
5. For each search term that received the warning screen, include the number of unique times the term was searched within the past 365 days and the number of times that the user selected “See results anyway” for each term.
6. For each search term that received the warning screen, did Meta’s systems ever *recommend* that term to a user within the past 365 days?
7. Provide a detailed explanation of Meta’s decision to remove the warning screen.
8. Produce all documents, including but not limited to product roadmaps, calendar entries, meeting minutes, and email correspondence, related to Meta’s development of and decision to display this warning screen.

This letter also serves as a formal request to preserve any and all documents and information, inclusive of e-mails, text messages, internal message system messages, calls, logs of meetings, and internal memoranda, related to the presence of child sexual abuse material in Meta’s recommendation systems.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Ted Cruz
United States Senator