1. **For each year from 2019 to 2023, please provide the following:**

   a. **the total number of users on your platform;**

   Discord has in excess of 150 million users globally. However we are a private company and do not publish or share monthly active user (MAU) numbers publicly. We would be happy to provide more specific U.S. figures to your office confidentially.

   b. **the total number of users under the age of 18 on your platform;**

   As stated above, Discord is a private company and does not publish or share MAU numbers publicly, no matter the demographic subset of users at issue. We would be happy to provide more specific U.S. figures to your office confidentially.

   c. **the estimated number of users under the age of 13 on your platform;**

   As Discord prohibits the usage of its platform by individuals under the age of 13, Discord does not have data responsive to this question.

   d. **the number of users of your platform under the age of 18 who were paired with, or supervised by, a parent or guardian using your Family Center tool?**

   Family Center launched in summer of 2023 so there is no data prior to that date. As of February 2, 2024, there are 15,000 parent users currently connected to 15,500 under-18 users on Discord Family Center.

   e. **your company's annual revenue;**

   Discord is a private company and does not publish or share revenue figures publicly. We'd be happy to provide these figures to your office confidentially.

   f. **your company's annual budget for trust and safety;**

   2019
   - Trust & Safety: **$2.4M** in full-time employees (FTEs) and related expenses;
     Safety Tooling: **$1.2M** (estimated)

2020
- Trust & Safety: **$4.9M** in FTEs and related expenses;
- Safety Tooling: **$3.4M**

2021
- Trust & Safety: **$9.4M** in FTEs and related expenses;
- Safety Tooling: **$24.3M**

2022
- Trust & Safety: **$18.4M** in FTEs and related expenses;
- Safety Tooling: **$36.3M**

2023
- Trust & Safety: **$29.6M** in FTEs and related expenses;
- Safety Tooling: **$60M**

*The financial information provided above does not include cross-functional efforts that contribute to trust and safety, including things like engineering efforts, marketing, policy, legal support, and more. Discord is unable to estimate those numbers prior to 2023 but in that year those efforts accounted for **$30.8 million dollars** in direct expenses.*

g. **your company's annual budget to address online child sexual exploitation;**

Discord's budget is not organized in a manner which allows it to determine funding dedicated to solely addressing online child sexual exploitation, but substantial resources from Trust & Safety, Engineer, Legal, Policy, and other teams work towards addressing this issue.

h. **the total number of employees working to address trust and safety;**

- **2019:** 22 FTEs within Trust & Safety
- **2020:** 37 FTEs within Trust & Safety
- **2021:** 81 FTEs within Trust & Safety
- **2022:** 79 FTEs within Trust & Safety
- **2023:** 90 FTEs within Trust & Safety

*The information provided above does not include employees on cross-functional teams that contribute to trust and safety, including engineering, marketing, policy, legal support, and more. Discord is unable to estimate those numbers prior to 2023 but in that year approximately **75 additional employees** contributed to efforts to address trust and safety. It also does not include external partner agents. That number grew from 10 additional external partner agents in 2019 to **approximately 250 in 2023**.*

i. **the total number of employees working to address online child sexual exploitation.**

Discord has more than 20 percent of its total Trust and Safety employees dedicated to Minor Safety efforts, and nearly 40 percent of its external partners involved with child safety reports. Discord has 18 full-time employees and 158 external partners directly involved in these issues.

2. **How did your company determine that 13 was the appropriate age for a child to begin using your platform?**

We allow teens to access our services in accordance with local requirements and federal law.

3. **What legal obligation does your company have in the United States to ensure that your platforms are safe for children before they are launched?**

In the United States, Discord is subject to a variety of federal and state laws that address children's safety. On a federal level, Discord must comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). States have and continue to create legal and regulatory frameworks to bolster children's privacy and online safety.

4. **For users under the age of 18,**

   a. **what are the default privacy settings for their accounts?**

   User profiles are not public in the ways one might experience on other platforms. To start, one cannot begin searching for users and see a list of possible matches to add as a friend. Instead, one must know and then specifically search for the username associated with the account they would like to add as a friend. This layer of searchability protection applies to all account types.

   The full range of user settings are available and can be customized via the user settings menu. For example, while users can see one another's usernames when in the same server, Discord provides each user control over who can try to add them as friends. A user can apply these controls by toggling the options under the section titled "Who can send you a friend request" of the "Friend Request" option in the user settings. There, a user has three categories by which they can limit friend requests: "Everyone;" "Friends of Friends;" and, "Server Members." Users can also apply controls that restrict who can send them DMs, and by default teens can only be DM'd by their friends and members of the communities they have chosen to join.

   In October 2023, Discord announced Teen Safety Assist, a series of new features designed to keep teens safe on our platform. One of the tools announced as a part of this new initiative is Sensitive Content Filters, which automatically blur

potentially sensitive media sent to teens in direct messages (DMs), group direct messages (GDMs), and in servers. Blurring is enabled by default for teen users both in DMs and GDMs with friends and in servers. In DMs and GDMs with non-friends, potentially sensitive media is blocked by default for teen users. Adult users can also choose to opt-in to this feature by changing their Privacy & Safety Settings.

Last fall, Discord also launched Safety Alerts on Senders, a tool designed in collaboration with the child safety non-profit Thorn that alerts teen users on Discord when a conversation is potentially unwanted. This new feature is on by default for teen users and helps determine when a DM sent to a teen from an unfamiliar user should trigger the delivery of a safety alert to the teen recipient. The alert encourages teens to think carefully before replying to messages from strangers, allows teen users to block new and unfamiliar senders, and provides a link to safety tips for how teens can best protect themselves online.

On February 6, 2024, Discord announced Safety Alerts in Chat, a new feature also developed in collaboration with Thorn that leverages machine learning algorithms to analyze messages between adults and teenagers. This product aims to identify messages that may be indicative of grooming behaviors. Upon detection, it will notify a teen user about these potentially harmful messages and offer a suite of safety tools, including options to block and report the sender, along with providing advice on dealing with an unwanted situation and encouraging the teen user to take a break from the conversation, reach out to Crisis Text Line for live help, or visit NoFiltr.org for more resources and safety tips. This new feature will start rolling out in the coming weeks.

b. **what limitations are placed by default on content these users can access, content that will be directed toward them, and individuals they can communicate with?**

Discord's Community Guidelines require that all adult content posted to Discord be kept behind an age-restricted gate that prevents access by users under 18 years of age. If a server is organized around age-restricted themes or if the majority of the server's content is focused on adult content, the server must be classified as age-restricted. The Guidelines' restriction on adult content to age-restricted spaces applies to both servers and channels. Users under 18 years of age are not able to join or view the content in age-restricted servers and channels.

As explained above, Sensitive Content Filters and Safety Alerts for Senders are on by default for teen users. Safety Alerts in Chat, our most recent safety feature, will be rolled out in the coming weeks and will be enabled by default for teens.

c. **can they change their default settings without the awareness of their parent or guardian, or without the consent of their parent or guardian?**

Users under 18 years of age cannot alter Discord's settings in order to access content in age-restricted servers or channels. Users under 18 years of age also cannot disable Sensitive Content Filters or the Safety Alerts for Senders features described above.

d. in 2023, how many changed their default settings?

In 2023, approximately 278,000 U.S. monthly active users under the age of 18 changed any default privacy setting at some point during the year; as stated above, however, users under 18 years of age cannot alter Discord's settings in order to access content in age-restricted servers or channels nor can users under 18 years of age disable Sensitive Content Filters or the Safety Alerts for Senders features.

5. **If the default settings are different for users aged 16 and 17 than they are for users under the age of 16, please explain why your company takes this position, how this position was developed, and whether any company personnel voiced objections to or raised concerns about this position.**

Default settings for users aged 16 and 17 are no different for users under the age of 16.

6. **What studies, research, summaries, or data does your company have reflecting the efficacy of its parental controls and child safety measures? Please provide these studies, research, summaries, or data.**

Discord tracks the efficacy of its automated child sexual abuse material (CSAM) detection systems at a daily cadence. This includes examining the detection and precision of models, the outcomes, the number of false positives, the overall number of images detected by the model, and the proactivity rate. Discord uses this information to inform future improvements to its detection models and safety tools, review the efficacy of its interventions and existing tools, and gain insight into their current state of operation.

For example, in early Q1 2023, Discord's PhotoDNA false positive rate was approximately 45 percent. Through analysis enabled by these tools, that rate has fallen to approximately 20 percent. This improvement was driven both by examination of data related to the efficacy of Discord's CSAM detection and intervention tools, and investment in and implementation of new tools. For example, Discord collaborated with industry peers to further develop CLIP, a machine learning image detection and identification algorithm, into a specialized version designed to detect unknown and AI-generated CSAM. As a result, our internal hash database is now able to identify more CSAM. In recognition of the industry-wide need to develop and deploy tools to effectively identify novel CSAM, as of October we have made Discord's CSAM-trained CLIP implementation open source, so that we can share our successes with other organizations—without cost—and contribute to the broader fight against CSAM online. By leveraging these tools, Discord's model had an 87 percent increase in recall, i.e. proactively-detected confirmed positive CSAM.

Further improvements are coming shortly, such as the ability to ignore repeated false positives to prevent a Discord agent from needing to examine a known-false positive image more than once, which will improve precision even further.

7. **Concerning international law,**

   a. **what steps have your company and its subsidiaries taken to comply with the European Union's Digital Services Act?**

   Discord has undertaken work in order to meet our obligations under the DSA, including:

   - updating our new Warning System hub—a feature available to users worldwide—to allow EU users to login and view their account standing, even when the account is suspended, and adding more context to our action notices, including the content that violated our policies (as long as providing that additional context does not harm Discord or others)t;
   - updating our Safety Center with information about how to submit DSA reports, appeal enforcement decisions, and more;
   - created a Reports & Appeal process for DSA-eligible reports; and
   - added dedicated pathways for DSA-required government requests and trusted flagger reports to our existing law enforcement portal, among other steps.

   b. **what steps has your company and its subsidiaries taken to comply with the United Kingdom's Online Safety Act?**

   Discord has followed closely the drafting and passage of the United Kingdom's Online Safety Act (UK OSA). The UK OSA's requirements are not yet fully defined. Discord is currently reviewing the draft codes as they become available and is engaging with the relevant UK regulator.

   c. **what steps has your company and its subsidiaries taken to comply with Australia's Online Safety Act?**

   Discord has evaluated its existing practices against the obligations under Australia's OSA and the existing codes and standards, and we have published information for Australian users about our obligations under the law.

   d. **if those laws create a safer, healthier online experience for kids on your platforms, do you commit to implement these changes in the United States? If not, why not?**

   We view user safety not only as our responsibility but absolutely essential to fulfilling our mission and making sure Discord continues to be the best place to hang out and have fun with friends. We will evaluate and implement practices

globally that further this work. For example, we plan to evaluate the features we built to meet our obligations under the DSA to identify those that improve safety for all of our users.

8. **This past summer, NBC News identified 242 publicly listed Discord servers created in the previous month that appeared to openly market sexually explicit content of minors, including at least 15 that directly appealed to teens by claiming to be sexual communities for minors. Some of these communities had over 1,500 members.**

   Additionally, your platform allows for text, audio, and video chat, facilitating the creation and sharing of CSAM.

   What steps is your company taking to identify and remove these servers, users, and CSAM content? How does your company measure the efficacy of those steps?

   In addition to the hash matching described in our other answers, as well as our use of CLIP to detect unknown and AI-generated CSAM, Discord uses internal tools (including machine learning techniques) and works with industry partners (including peer companies, non-profits, and researchers) to detect networks of actors engaging in CSAM distribution. This approach, leveraging technology and human expertise, allows us to better identify and remove spaces and users on Discord related to CSAM content.

   Discord also relies on users reporting violative material as part of our response to CSAM across the platform.

   Users who upload abuse material of children onto Discord are reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) and removed from the service. We deeply value our partnership with NCMEC and their efforts to ensure that grooming and endangerment cases are quickly escalated to law enforcement.

   In addition, Discord works with leading groups and partner organizations to assist in the detection of CSAM and the improvement of our internal policies and processes, including NCMEC, the Family Online Safety Institute and the Technology Coalition (a group of companies working together to end online child sexual exploitation and abuse), among others. We are also a frequent sponsor of events dedicated to increasing awareness of, and action on, child safety issues such as the annual Dallas Crimes Against Children Conference.

   As part of our Safer Internet Day efforts in 2023 we partnered with NoFiltr, the youth-targeted online safety program by Thorn, to develop online safety resources for young people. These resources included an interactive quiz, online fortune teller, and a social media campaign aimed at supporting healthy digital habits and online safety.

   Finally, we invest heavily in advanced tooling and education so parents know how our service works and understand the controls that can contribute to creating a positive and safe experience on Discord for their children. Discord also continues to innovate our

approach to child safety. As described above, our recently announced Teen Safety Assist initiative contains new tools to keep teens safe on Discord: Sensitive Content Filters and Safety Alerts for Senders are already in place and working to make Discord a safer place for teens; Safety Alerts in Chat will be rolled out in the coming weeks.

9. **YouTube, TikTok, and Twitch all use technology to monitor livestreaming for sexual abuse. Discord does not. In a statement, Discord said that, "Discord does not monitor livestream content," because spending money to monitor that content would be "at the detriment of other Discord safety programs."**

    a. **How would monitoring livestreams on Discord be detrimental to other Discord safety programs?**

    Discord does not have broadcast livestream capabilities; Discord users are only able to livestream within the communities of which they are a member. This inherently limits the distribution of the content streamed, and Discord therefore does not monitor or record livestream content or voice chats. Discord has instead prioritized resources into other forms of CSAM detection as described in response to other questions. Monitoring livestreaming at the scale Discord operates would require that we redirect resources away from these other critical child safety functionalities.

    b. **How does Discord choose which aspects of its platform to monitor for child abuse and which to ignore?**

    Discord takes the detection, removal, and reporting to NCMEC of CSAM seriously, and as a mid-sized company that has grown exponentially over the last several years, we have had to rigorously prioritize our resourcing related to safety. Our primary goal has been to build a strong, research-driven and values-based foundation on which we can continue to improve with additional tooling and technology.

    Discord also uses Machine Learning (ML) in targeted ways to help identify potential malicious use at the server, channel, and user registration level to identify potential bad actors or groups for further human review. As part of Discord's efforts to improve ML-based moderation, in 2021, Discord purchased Sentropy, a company that builds ML and Artificial Intelligence tools to help companies moderate disruptive behavior on their platforms. Discord also uses industry-standard hashing and matching technology, including PhotoDNA, for other types of illegal conduct, such as CSAM.

10. **A few weeks ago, the Mayor of Highland Park, Illinois, shared that Discord has been linked to several perpetrators of mass shootings across the county. The individual who shot and killed seven people and wounded 47 others at a Fourth of July parade in Highland Park had his own Discord server that promoted violent imagery. The perpetrator of the Buffalo, New York mass shooting used Discord to**

make a to-do list for his attack. Last month, a 17-year-old who fatally shot two and injured six others at his school in Iowa used Discord to chat about school shootings and wrote about "gearing up" and assembling his guns just moments before he opened fire in his school's cafeteria.

What steps has your company taken to ensure Discord identifies potentially violent individuals and reports them to law enforcement?

Discord has specialist teams trained in evaluating and acting upon certain types of high-harm conduct, including Violent Extremism, Exploitative and Child Sexual Abuse Materials, and Cybercrime. These teams engage in proactive moderation using a combination of human interventions and machine learning. These proactive efforts are detailed in Discord's [Transparency Reports](#) and in additional materials providing an overview of the Trust & Safety team and team-by-team breakdowns. They also receive regular updates from law enforcement, the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT) and other organizations, participate in events and conferences run by academic experts, review resource articles and books, and study language and phrases used by extremist groups. All of these efforts enable specialist moderation teams to better interpret the material they are reviewing and make informed choices.

Discord also uses Machine Learning (ML) in targeted ways to help identify potential malicious use at the server, channel, and user registration level to identify potential bad actors or groups for further human review. As part of Discord's efforts to improve ML-based moderation, in 2021, Discord purchased Sentropy, a company that builds ML and Artificial Intelligence tools to help companies moderate disruptive behavior on their platforms. Discord also uses industry-standard hashing and matching technology, including PhotoDNA, for other types of illegal conduct, such as CSAM.

11. **You testified that Discord does not encrypt messages on its platform. You stated that, "This is a choice we made." You further explained that, "We don't believe we can fulfill our safety obligations if the text messages of teens are fully encrypted, because encryption would block our ability to investigate a serious situation when appropriate report to law enforcement."**

    Yet, Discord published a blog post last summer in which it announced that it was "beginning to experiment with new encryption protocols and technologies for voice and video calls on Discord."

    Do you commit to keeping communications involving users under the age of 18 unencrypted?

    Text messages on Discord are not end-to-end encrypted and we commit to keeping teen users' text messages unencrypted. The features Discord deploys to help keep teens safe on our service, such as our Teen Safety Assist feature described in detail above, are designed to identify conversations with teen users that could present a risk to their safety,

and the effectiveness of our teen safety features would be undermined by encrypting the messages of teen users.

We believe user expectations for the privacy of voice and video calls are higher than for text messages. Accordingly, to meet user expectations, we are evaluating implementation of end-to-end encryption for voice and video traffic on our platform.

12. According to Discord's website, it takes a "proactive and automated approach to safety" only on servers with more than 200 members. Smaller servers rely on server owners and community moderators to define and enforce norms of behavior.

Indeed, in a September 2021 interview, Mr. Citron described how most people engage with Discord in smaller groups of 10 or 20 people and that "in those kind of small spaces…we leave it to…people to decide…what…is acceptable…in their space."

Real world experience shows the risk of this approach. Last summer, for example, NBC News reported that adults had used hidden communities and chat rooms on Discord to "groom children before abducting them, trade child sexual exploitation material…and extort minors whom they trick into sending nude images."

How do you defend an approach to safety that relies on groups of fewer than 200 sexual predators to report themselves for things like grooming, the trading of CSAM, and sextortion?

The above quote from my September 2021 CNBC interview omits relevant information that I shared about Discord's approach to safety, which does not rely solely upon user-generated reports. Discord leverages a mix of both proactive detection and reactive measures, supported by a range of human-powered and technical solutions.

During the interview, I explained that "in those kind of small spaces … we leave it to … people to decide … what … is acceptable … in their space *in the context of our Community Guidelines*." I further explained that "if people encounter content that … let's say that the moderators in a space aren't deleting or is violating our Guidelines, we do have a Trust & Safety team, full time employees that people can escalate issues to, and because Discord is not end-to-end encrypted, although we don't proactively read people's messages, if people forward messages to or report content to our Trust & Safety team, we will go investigate and we will action communities that are violating our Guidelines."

It bears repeating that Discord has a zero-tolerance policy for content or conduct that endangers or sexualizes children. Our [Community Guidelines](#) prohibit CSAM and child sexualization. We do not allow CSAM on Discord, including AI-generated, photorealistic CSAM. We proactively scan images uploaded to our service—no matter the size of the server in which a user seeks to post an image or the number of users participating in the conversation—in order to detect, remove, and report CSAM content and perpetrators to NCMEC, which subsequently works with local law enforcement to take appropriate

action. These proactive measures are deployed in smaller servers and direct messages just as they are deployed in large group spaces on our service. In addition to our use of industry standard tools to detect and remove known CSAM, Discord invests in developing innovative technologies to proactively identify novel CSAM—images that have not previously been detected and so do not appear in available hash databases. Additionally, as described in response to a previous question, Discord uses ML models to harness metadata from known communities that violate our policies to detect and remove similar communities.

Discord also has a zero-tolerance policy for inappropriate sexual conduct with children, meaning inappropriate sexual contact between adults and teens on the service, with special attention given to predatory behaviors such as online enticement and the sexual extortion of children, commonly referred to as "sextortion." We also invest in new ways to detect text-based sexual exploitation and extortion of minors, including working collaboratively with Thorn to develop a machine learning model that will detect when a minor is in communication with someone actively trying to exploit or extort them.

Moreover, in the time since I participated in that interview, Discord has created new features specifically designed to keep teens safe on the platform—features that are deployed in any space in which a teen has conversations on Discord, no matter the size of the server or how many users are participating in the conversation. Our new safety initiative, Teen Safety Assist, makes new tools available to proactively protect teens and offer tips to make their time on Discord safer. In addition to the tools described below, we are continuing to invest in safety technology and we look forward to adding even more protective messaging features for teen users in the future.

   a. Safety Alerts on Senders were designed in collaboration with the child safety non-profit Thorn to alert teen users on Discord when a conversation is potentially unwanted. This new feature helps determine when a DM sent to a teen from an unfamiliar user should trigger the delivery of a safety alert to the teen recipient. The alert encourages teens to think carefully before replying to messages from strangers, allows teen users to block new and unfamiliar senders, and provides a link to safety tips for how teens can best protect themselves online.

   b. Safety Alerts in Chat, a new feature also developed in collaboration with Thorn, leverages machine learning algorithms to analyze messages between adults and teenagers. This product aims to identify messages that may be indicative of grooming behaviors. Upon detection, it will notify teenagers about these potentially harmful messages and offer a suite of safety tools, including options to block and report the sender, along with providing advice on dealing with an unwanted situation and encouraging the teen user to take a break from the conversation, reach out to Crisis Text Line for live help, or visit NoFiltr.org for more resources and safety tips. This new feature will start rolling out in the coming weeks.

c. [Sensitive Content Filters](#) automatically blur potentially sensitive media sent to teens in DMs, GDMs, and in servers. Blurring is enabled by default for teen users in DMs and GDMs with friends and in servers. In DMs and GDMs with non-friends, potentially sensitive media is blocked by default for teen users.

d. The [Family Center](#) was designed to provide parents and guardians with tools to better understand how their teens use our service. Our Family Center allows parents and guardians to get insights into the communities their teen children have joined, including which users their teens have recently added as friends, which users their teen has messaged or called in DMs or GDMs, and which servers their teen has joined or participated in. The Family Center also allows parents and guardians to get a weekly email with a high-level summary of the time their teen spends on Discord. The Family Center is designed not just to provide parents and guardians with greater insight into how their teen uses Discord, but to also help parents start conversations with their teen about online safety.

Senator Lindsey O. Graham
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
Questions for the Record
Jason Citron, Co-Founder and CEO, Discord Inc.

1. **Do you support S. 1207, the bipartisan EARN IT Act? Why or why not?**

   Discord is aligned with the goals of the EARN IT Act—to curb the availability and distribution of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) online. However, Discord is concerned that the imposition of broad liability could inadvertently result in the over-moderation of content by online services, including the blocking and suppression of otherwise constitutionally protected speech. We look forward to working with the Committee to address these and other concerns.

2. **What measures are you taking to prevent and address sextortion, including financial sextortion, on your companies' platforms?**

   As with our efforts to prevent and disrupt the dissemination of CSAM, Discord's approach to child safety more broadly leverages a mix of both proactive detection and reactive measures, supported by a range of human-powered and technical solutions. Examples relevant to the issue of sextortion include Discord's Safety Alerts for teen users, which are designed to detect unwanted interactions via text message and better equip teens to safely navigate such situations.

   In October 2023, Discord announced Teen Safety Assist, a series of new features designed to keep teens safe on our platform. Among the tools announced as a part of this new initiative are Safety Alerts on Senders, a tool designed in collaboration with the child safety non-profit Thorn that alerts teen users on Discord when a conversation is potentially unwanted. This new feature is on by default for teen users and helps determine when a DM sent to a teen from an unfamiliar user should trigger the delivery of a safety alert to the teen recipient. The alert encourages teens to think carefully before replying to messages from strangers, allows teen users to block new and unfamiliar senders, and provides a link to safety tips for how teens can best protect themselves online.

   On February 6, 2024, Discord announced Safety Alerts in Chat, a new feature also developed in collaboration with Thorn, which leverages machine learning algorithms to analyze messages between adults and teenagers. This product aims to identify messages that may be indicative of grooming behaviors. Upon detection, it will notify teenagers about these potentially harmful messages and offer a suite of safety tools, including options to block and report the sender, along with providing advice on dealing with an unwanted situation and encouraging the teen user to take a break from the conversation, reach out to Crisis Text Line for live help, or visit NoFiltr.org for more resources and safety tips. This new feature will start rolling out in the coming weeks.

Additionally, Discord has also invested in staffing a dedicated team housed under our Trust & Safety Minor Exploitative Content team whose sole focus is addressing high-harm sextortion activity on the platform.

    a. What methods are in place to detect and disrupt this type of abuse in real time?

    Discord's Safety Alerts on Senders and Safety Alerts in Chat operate in real time.

3. **Please provide the committee statistics on how long it takes your company to respond to various types of legal process from law enforcement?**

Discord reviews and responds to all legal requests from law enforcement in a timely manner. We comply with valid legal process before any indicated due date and communicate with law enforcement on the status of their request. For emergency disclosure requests, Discord strives to respond within 15 minutes and to have a full resolution within an hour of receipt.

4. **Do you notify your users when law enforcement serves subpoenas/summons for subscriber information and specifically requests not to notify the subscriber/user?**

As an electronic communication service provider, Discord strictly complies with the provisions of the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA), and discloses information to law enforcement in accordance with the provisions of the statute. With regards to user notice, Discord would not provide a user with notice when we receive an order prohibiting us from doing so. Moreover, if the legal process pertains to child sexual exploitation or the danger of death or serious bodily injury, Discord does not provide notice to help avoid a harmful or dangerous outcome resulting from the notice.

Discord does not notify users when it receives a 90-day preservation order under the provisions of existing law. See 18 USC 2703(f). Thus, after sending a preservation order to Discord, law enforcement always has 90 days to secure proper legal process, including a non-disclosure order, while relevant materials are preserved.

Additionally, if Discord receives legal process without a prior preservation order and without a non-disclosure order, even in cases where Discord intends to provide notice to a user, we would first alert law enforcement of this plan and allow law enforcement to withdraw the subpoena or delay its enforcement until a non-disclosure order can be obtained. This policy effectively ensures that users are not notified of legal process in circumstances where law enforcement wants to prevent such notification. More information on Discord's practices can be found in this article: How Discord Works With Law Enforcement.

    a. If you notify the subscriber, how long do you wait until notification goes out?

    Discord's policy does not mandate a waiting period prior to user notification;

however, Discord does not provide a user with notice when we receive a confirmation from law enforcement that we are prohibited from doing so.

b. **Are you aware that by notifying the subscriber about a law enforcement subpoena for their subscriber information that you are jeopardizing critical evidence that could be erased before law enforcement can serve warrants?**

Discord preserves the evidence requested about subscribers before possibly notifying them of any law enforcement process. Thus, we do not jeopardize critical evidence on our systems. Where law enforcement believes that notification in a particular case could cause the type of adverse effect you describe, law enforcement can, and often does, serve Discord with a non-disclosure order requiring that notification be delayed. This is the appropriate method by which non-disclosure orders should be obtained. Discord is one of many providers, not limited to technology companies, who have adopted policies to provide subscribers with notice when their material is sought to be obtained by law enforcement.

c. **Would your company agree to a 90-day non-disclosure to subscribers to allow law enforcement ample time to secure proper legal process?**

Discord does not notify users when it receives a 90-day preservation order under the provisions of existing law. See 18 USC 2703(f). Thus, after sending a preservation order to Discord, law enforcement always has 90 days to secure proper legal process, including a non-disclosure order, while the relevant materials are preserved. Similarly, when Discord receives legal process without a preservation order, even in cases where Discord intends to provide notice to a subscriber, we would first alert law enforcement of this plan and allow law enforcement to withdraw the subpoena or delay its enforcement until a non-disclosure order can be obtained. This policy effectively ensures that subscribers are not notified of legal process in circumstances where law enforcement wants to prevent such notification.

d. **Do you actively seek out and incorporate feedback and insight from survivors of online sexual exploitation to improve your trust and safety policies and practices and to prevent and disrupt child sexual abuse material (CSAM) production and distribution on your platform? Can you provide examples?**

Discord's policies and practices are driven by expert research that draws from diverse perspectives, including survivors. For example, we collaborated with the researchers from Thorn to ensure we were taking a research-backed approach to designing the Teen Safety Assist feature to ensure that it reflected the lived experience of teens.

Additionally, through our participation in Tech Coalition and other convenings led

by groups like WeProtect Global Alliance and the Internet Watch Foundation, we are committed to constantly learning and evolving our approach to better support young people and those who may be victims of online sexual abuse. For example, earlier this year three Discord employees attended the Multi-Stakeholder Forum to Combat the Financial Sextortion of Young People, where discussions about developing safety tools and approaches centered on the experiences of young people and victims. Discord also participated in the 2022 WeProtect Global Alliance convening which featured a presentation from the Brave Movement, a survivor-centered global movement fighting to end childhood sexual violence. Discord is a proud sponsor and supporter of the annual Crimes Against Children Conference, organized by the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center. This annual conference brings together key stakeholders from industry, law enforcement, and advocacy to provide specialized training and knowledge sharing in various critical fields involved in crimes against children. Discord also plans to participate in the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's (NCMEC) upcoming CyberTipline Roundtable, where stakeholders gather for collaborative discussion of potential improvements to the reporting process.

e. **If not, please explain.**

Please see the above answer.

5. **During our hearing, you testified that you collaborate with parents and parent organizations to create mechanisms to keep children safe online. Please elaborate and cite examples of your company's work with non-employee parents and parent organizations.**

Discord's work with parents and parent-led organizations is vital to our child safety efforts.

Since 2022, Discord has been a sponsor of the National PTA. Discord collaborates with National PTA on digital safety resources and events designed to elevate youth voices and foster shared understanding among teens, caregivers and educators. The PTA Connected: Build Up and Belong program, sponsored by Discord, facilitates technology discussions between teens and their parents and caregivers about online safety topics. In 2023, 25 local PTAs were selected to receive $1,250 each, sponsored by Discord, to host a PTA Connected: Build Up and Belong program. Discord also sponsored grants for this program in 2022.

Discord is also a member of the Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI). FOSI develops resources to provide parents and guardians with the tools they need to confidently navigate the online world with their families.

Discord also supports ConnectSafely, a non-profit organization that educates people about online safety, privacy, security, and digital wellness. ConnectSafely has developed research-based safety tips, as well as in-depth guides and "quick-guides" for parents,

educators, youth, and policymakers. Discord worked with ConnectSafely to develop a [Parent's Guide to Discord](#).

In recognition of the unique safety challenges that accompany teens' use of the internet, Discord has also created special features designed to give parents and teens even more control over their experience on Discord. The [Family Center](#) was designed to provide parents and guardians with tools to better understand how their teens use our service. Our Family Center allows parents to get insights into the communities their teen children have joined, including which users their teens have recently added as friends, which users their teen has messaged or called in DMs or GDMs, and which servers their teen has joined or participated in. The Family Center also allows parents to get a weekly email with a high-level summary of the time their teen spends on Discord. The Family Center is designed not just to provide parents and guardians with greater insight into how their teen uses Discord, but to also help parents start conversations with their teen about online safety.

6. **Why does your company have the age limit of 13 years old for a user to sign up for an account?**

   We allow teens to access our services in accordance with [local requirements](#) and federal law.

   a. **Why not younger or older?**

      Please see the answer to the preceding question.

7. **How many minors use your platform? How much money does your company make annually from these minors?**

   There are approximately 2.7 million monthly active users under the age of 18 in the U.S. Discord is unable to answer the second part of the question as age data is segregated from revenue data and cannot be aggregated together.

8. **What percentage of your employees work on trust and safety and how much money does your company invest annually in trust and safety?**

   More than 15 percent of our employees work on safety at Discord. By way of context, that means our Safety team is larger than our Marketing team. In addition to the significant investment we have made in our full-time employees working on these issues, we also work closely with external partners to supplement our own work on critical safety issues. In 2023, Discord invested **$29.6M** in full-time employees and related expenses, **$60M** in safety tooling, and **$30.8M** in cross-functional efforts that contributed to trust and safety, such as related engineering, marketing, policy, and legal support.

9. **It is sometimes challenging for law enforcement conducting criminal investigations to determine the true identity of a person behind a name on social media or other**

online platforms, and whether an online identity is an actual person. What are you doing to validate the true identity of users – or the fact that a user is a human – when they create an account on your platforms?

To access the services on an ongoing basis, Discord requires users to submit an email address and/or a phone number upon account registration.

Discord also imposes a CAPTCHA when a login comes from a new IP address range—reducing the efficiency of automated systems attempting to access and use the platform.

10. **Is your company using safety technology to detect and prevent live video child sexual abuse on your platforms and apps that allow users to stream or share live video? If not, please explain.**

Discord does not have broadcast livestream capabilities; Discord users are only able to livestream within the communities of which they are a member. This inherently limits the distribution of the content streamed, and Discord therefore does not monitor or record livestream content or voice chats. Discord has instead prioritized resources into other forms of CSAM detection as described in response to other questions. Monitoring livestreaming at the scale Discord operates would require that we redirect resources away from these other critical child safety functionalities.

a. **Has your company tested that or similar technology? If not, are you developing similar technology to address child sexual abuse in live video?**

We have not tested or developed technology with regard to live streaming or live videos, however Discord regularly evaluates new technologies and best practices relating to audio and video content moderation.

11. **How are you measuring if your trust and safety policies, practices, and tools are effective in protecting children from sexual abuse and exploitation on your platform?**

Discord tracks the efficacy of its automated CSAM detection systems at a daily cadence. This includes examining the detection and precision of models, the outcomes, the number of false positives, the overall number of images detected by the model, outcomes of, and the proactivity rate. Discord uses this information to inform future improvements to its detection models and safety tools, review the efficacy of its interventions and existing tools, and gain insight into their current state of operation.

a. **What specific metrics or key performance indicators do you use?**

In measuring the effectiveness of our trust and safety policies, practices, and tools, Discord evaluates the detection and precision of models, outcomes, the number of false positives, the overall number of images detected by the model, and the

proactivity rate, among other factors.

12. Is your company using language analysis tools to detect grooming activities? If not, please explain.

On February 6, 2024, Discord announced [Safety Alerts in Chat](#), a new feature developed in collaboration with Thorn, a leading non-profit in the minor safety space, which leverages machine learning algorithms to analyze messages between adults and teenagers. This product aims to identify messages that may be indicative of grooming behaviors. Upon detection, it will notify teenagers about these potentially harmful messages and offer a suite of safety tools, including options to block and report the sender, along with providing advice on dealing with an unwanted situation and encouraging the teen user to take a break from the conversation, reach out to Crisis Text Line for live help, or visit [NoFiltr.org](#) for more resources and safety tips. This new feature will start rolling out in the coming weeks.

    a. What investments will your company make to develop new or improve existing tools?

    Discord invests in developing innovative technologies to proactively identify novel CSAM—images that have not previously been detected and thus do not appear in available hash databases. We also invest in new ways to detect the exploitation of minors (commonly referred to as "grooming").

      ● **Novel CSAM:** Recently, Discord collaborated with industry peers to build and implement a visual safety technology to detect unknown CSAM and AI-generated CSAM with positive results. Effective tools that keep children safe online should be industry standards, not a means for companies to gain a competitive advantage. In recognition of that, as of October we have made this technology open source, so that we can share our successes with other organizations—without cost—and contribute to the broader fight against CSAM online.

      ● **Exploitation of Minors:** We worked collaboratively with Thorn, a leading non-profit in the minor safety space, to develop [Safety Alerts in Chat](#), a new feature that leverages machine learning algorithms to analyze messages between adults and teenagers in order to identify messages that may be indicative of grooming behaviors. This technology continues to be developed for broader industry use and further demonstrates our ongoing commitment not just to make Discord—but also the broader communications ecosystem—safer for kids.

13. What resources have you developed for victims and survivors of abuse on your platforms?

To support our users, Discord partners with Crisis Textline, a non-profit that provides

24/7 text-based mental health support and crisis intervention via trained volunteer Crisis Counselors.

We also expanded our partnership with INHOPE, a global network combatting CSAM online. Through this partnership, we are better able to collaborate with the hotlines globally working to address this important issue.

14. **What is your response to requests for content removal from CSAM survivors and other members of the public?**

Reports concerning the highest harm material, including reports of CSAM or inappropriate contact with a minor, are prioritized for review and enforcement. For individuals working with law enforcement agencies, Discord processes removal and takedown requests through an escalated pathway to ensure a rapid response.

15. **In discussions with your leadership team, there was mention of particular safety measures on large servers. Isn't it more likely for nefarious activity to go on in smaller servers? How do you monitor and scrutinize the smaller servers?**

Discord's core safety measures apply across the entire surface of our platform, in large servers and smaller spaces alike. We proactively scan images uploaded to our service—no matter the size of the server in which a user seeks to post an image or the number of users participating in the conversation—in order to detect and report CSAM content and perpetrators to NCMEC, which subsequently works with local law enforcement to take appropriate action. These proactive measures are deployed in smaller servers and direct messages just as they are deployed in large group spaces on our service. In addition to our use of industry standard tools to detect and remove known CSAM, Discord invests in developing innovative technologies to proactively identify novel CSAM—images that have not previously been detected and so do not appear in available hash databases. Additionally, Discord uses ML models to harness metadata from known communities that violate our policies to detect and remove similar communities.

Discord has also created new features specifically designed to keep teens safe on the platform—features that are deployed in any space in which a teen has conversations on Discord, no matter the size of the server or how many users are participating in the conversation. Our new safety initiative, Teen Safety Assist, makes new tools available to proactively protect teens and offer tips to make their time on Discord safer. In addition to the tools described below, we are continuing to invest in safety technology and we look forward to adding even more protective messaging features for teen users in the future.

- Discord Safety Alerts were designed in collaboration with the child safety non-profit Thorn to alert teen users on Discord when a conversation is potentially unwanted. This new feature helps determine when a DM sent to a teen from an unfamiliar user should trigger the delivery of a safety alert to the teen recipient. The alert encourages teens to think carefully before replying to messages from

strangers, allows teen users to block new and unfamiliar senders, and provides a link to safety tips for how teens can best protect themselves online.

- [Safety Alerts in Chat](#), a new feature also developed in collaboration with Thorn, leverages machine learning algorithms to analyze messages between adults and teenagers. This product aims to identify messages that may be indicative of grooming behaviors. Upon detection, it will notify teenagers about these potentially harmful messages and offer a suite of safety tools, including options to block and report the sender, along with providing advice on dealing with an unwanted situation and encouraging the teen user to take a break from the conversation, reach out to Crisis Text Line for live help, or visit [NoFiltr.org](#) for more resources and safety tips. This new feature will start rolling out in the coming weeks.

- [Sensitive Content Filters](#) automatically blur potentially sensitive media sent to teens in DMs, GDMs, and in servers. Blurring is enabled by default for teen users in DMs and GDMs with friends and in servers. In DMs and GDMs with non-friends, potentially sensitive media is blocked by default for teen users.

16. **What voluntary hash-sharing or other information sharing initiatives does Discord participate in to help combat child sexual exploitation?**

Discord uses PhotoDNA to proactively scan images uploaded to our service in order to detect and report CSAM content and perpetrators to NCMEC, which subsequently works with local law enforcement to take appropriate action. In addition to hash matching, Discord uses internally developed tools (including machine learning techniques) and works with industry partners (including peer companies, non-profits, and researchers) to detect CSAM distribution.

In addition to our use of industry standard tools to detect and remove known CSAM, Discord invests in developing innovative technologies to proactively identify novel CSAM—images that have not previously been detected and so do not appear in available hash databases. Discord collaborated with industry peers to further develop CLIP, a machine learning image detection and identification algorithm, into a specialized version designed to detect unknown and AI-generated CSAM. In recognition of the industry-wide need to develop and deploy tools to effectively identify novel CSAM, as of October we have made Discord's CSAM-trained CLIP implementation open source, so that we can share our successes with other organizations—without cost—and contribute to the broader fight against CSAM online. By leveraging these tools, Discord's model had an 87 percent increase in recall, i.e., proactively-detected confirmed positive CSAM.

We are also investing in new ways to detect the exploitation of minors (commonly referred to as grooming), such as the Teen Safety Assist features described above.

As part of our extensive fight against CSAM, we continued to deepen our partnership with the [Tech Coalition](#). One of the most exciting parts of our partnership with the Tech

Coalition this year was the launch of [Lantern](), a first-of-its-kind signal sharing program for companies to enhance and strengthen how we detect attempts to sexually exploit and abuse children and teens online. Discord joined other industry partners like Google, Meta,, Roblox, Snap, and others to share signals about activity we detect that violates our policies and utilize signals shared by other companies to surface violating activity on their platforms.

Discord also works closely with NCMEC, utilizing their hash database in our internal models as well as developing technology to detect novel CSAM and opening that technology up to other companies through Project Lantern.

17. **Why does Discord not participate in NCMEC's "Take It Down" program to help stop the sharing of and remove nude and sexually explicit photos of minors?**

Discord does not yet participate in "Take It Down" because our work to integrate the program's hashing technology is not yet complete. Discord intends to complete that work, enabling Discord's participation in the program.

1. **What exemptions from the protections of Section 230 would your company be willing to accept?**

   Section 230's protections from liability are not absolute. For example, all federal criminal liability is already exempted from Section 230, as are intellectual property violations. To the extent that Congress contemplates further limiting Section 230's liability protections, it should take care not to stifle innovation or to inadvertently disincentivize platforms from moderating a broad range of potentially harmful content online.

2. **Is it your belief that your company should enjoy absolute immunity under Section 230 from suits like *Doe v. Twitter*, No. 21-CV-00485-JCS, 2023 WL 8568911 (N.D. Cal. Dec. 11, 2023), no matter the extent of your company's failure to remove reported child sexual abuse material from the platform or to stop its distribution?**

   We do not believe that companies have "absolute immunity" under Section 230. There are already existing limits in the statute, including for violations of federal criminal law or in cases where interactive computer services create the content in question. The case law also is continuing to evolve.

   Section 230 supports our ability to provide a service that enables community, expression, and connection. It also empowers us to take responsible action to remove harmful content, to enforce our policies, and to develop innovative approaches to online safety. Section 230 is also key to economic growth—allowing innovative services to flourish in the United States and in turn creating new jobs and opportunities for Americans.

1. **During the hearing, I asked the five witnesses whether the platform they represented publicly discloses "an estimate of the total amount of content—not a percentage of the overall…but the total amount of content on your platform—that violates" the platform's "policies prohibiting content about suicide or self-harm." I also asked if each platform "report[s] the total number of views that self-harm or suicide-promoting content that violates that policy gets on [each] platform." In response to these questions, you testified while under oath "Yes, we do."**

   After reviewing Discord Inc.'s ("Discord") most recent transparency report from December 2023, it appears that your testimony was misleading. First, Discord's transparency report does not disclose an estimate of the total amount of content on Discord's platform that violates the company's suicide and self-harm policy. Second, the transparency report does not disclose the estimated number of views that this violating content on the platform receives. These exclusions stand in direct contrast to your sworn testimony on January 31.

   a. **Please provide the specific citation to where Discord publicly discloses an estimate of the total amount of content on the platform that violates Discord's suicide and self-harm policy.**

      Thank you for this opportunity to clarify my testimony. I misunderstood the question posed during the hearing and misspoke. My answer referenced the section in Discord's quarterly transparency reports titled "Self Harm Concerns" that describes our work to prevent the normalization, promotion, and encouragement of self-harm and also discloses the enforcement actions we take on accounts and servers found to violate our policy prohibiting the glorification or promotion of suicide or self-harm.

      The enforcement data Discord reports on a quarterly basis represent actions our platform takes on content found to have violated our platform policies. The data disclosed is not an estimate of the total amount of violative content, but the actual amount discovered and actioned appropriately. In the first quarter of 2023, for example, 1,294 accounts and 540 servers were removed for self-harm concerns.

   b. **Please provide the specific citation to where Discord publicly discloses an estimate of the total number of views of content that violates Discord's suicide and self-harm policy.**

      Again, thank you for the opportunity to clarify my testimony. The enforcement data represent actions the platform takes on content found to have violated our platform policies, but Discord does not track the number of times a user views a

piece of content on the platform or impressions on content, regardless of whether the content was deemed violative of our Community Guidelines.

Tracking impressions on individual pieces of content is a functionality typically built to sustain business models that incorporate algorithms that promote content to users and/or rely on the sale of advertising, both of which are common to traditional social media platforms. As a chat and messaging app, Discord has not sought to track impressions or build other common social media features like news feeds.

c. **If Discord does not disclose these metrics, why not?**

As explained in the answer to question 1b, Discord does not track the number of times a user views a piece of content on the platform or impressions on content, regardless of whether the content was deemed violative of our Community Guidelines.

d. **Does Discord measure these metrics? If not, why not?**

No. As explained in the answer to question 1b, Discord does not track the number of times a user views a piece of content on the platform or impressions on content, regardless of whether the content was deemed violative of our Community Guidelines.

2. **Discord has previously reported how much content it removes under the platform's suicide and self-harm policy.**

    a. **For content that has been removed, does Discord measure how many views that content received prior to being removed? If not, why not?**

    No. As explained in the answer to question 1b, Discord does not track the number of times a user views a piece of content on the platform or impressions on content, regardless of whether the content was deemed violative of our Community Guidelines.

    b. **For content that has been removed, does Discord disclose how many views that content received prior to being removed? If so, please provide a specific citation to where Discord discloses that information. If not, why not?**

    No. As explained in the answer to question 1b, Discord does not track the number of times a user views a piece of content on the platform or impressions on content, regardless of whether the content was deemed violative of our Community Guidelines.

    c. **Please provide an estimate of the number of views content that was removed under this policy received in January 2024.**

We are unable to estimate the number of views an individual piece of content receives on Discord, regardless of whether the content was deemed violative of our Community Guidelines.

d. For content that has been removed, does Discord measure demographic factors about users who viewed the violating content, such as how many times the content was viewed by minors? If not, why not?

No. As explained in the answer to question 1b, Discord does not track the number of times a user views a piece of content on the platform or impressions on content, nor does Discord track the demographic data of users who may view an individual piece of content, regardless of whether the content was deemed violative of our Community Guidelines or the demographics of users who may have viewed the content.

e. For content that has been removed, does Discord disclose demographic factors about users who viewed the violating content, such as how many times the content was viewed by minors? If so, please provide a specific citation to where Discord discloses that information. If not, why not?

No. As explained in the answer to question 1b, Discord does not track the number of times a user views a piece of content on the platform or impressions on content, nor does Discord track the demographic data of users who may view an individual piece of content, regardless of whether the content was deemed violative of our Community Guidelines or the demographics of users who may have viewed the content.

f. Does Discord measure the number of users that have viewed content that was removed under its suicide and self-harm policy multiple times? If not, why not?

No. As explained in the answer to question 1b, Discord does not track the number of times a user views a piece of content on the platform or impressions on content, regardless of whether the content was deemed violative of our Community Guidelines.

g. Does Discord disclose the number of users that have viewed content that was removed under its suicide and self-harm policy multiple times? If so, please provide a specific citation to where Discord discloses that information. If not, why not?

No. As explained in the answer to question 1b, Discord does not track the number of times a user views a piece of content on the platform or impressions on content, regardless of whether the content was deemed violative of our Community

Guidelines or the demographic factors of users who may have viewed the content.

3. **Discord utilizes an algorithm to recommend or amplify content to users.**

Discord is a real-time communications platform that does not rely on algorithmic virality to drive usership. Discord does not have awards, quantification, or down-vote or up-vote features that incentivize users to post certain types of content over others. Discord does not use algorithms to recommend or amplify content to users from servers of which they are not already a member. For communities to which users already belong, Discord may send notifications regarding messages that have received a significant amount of engagement (for example, a message receiving a disproportionately high number of emoji reactions or replies specific to the message, demonstrating substantial engagement with the message, compared to the typical message in the server) and discussions to that user. Before a message can be highlighted to users via a notification, the message must satisfy numerous safety criteria such as whether the message had already been reported to Discord or if the message was shared in a server with adult content text-channels.

a. **For content that has been removed, does Discord measure whether and the extent to which the removed content was recommended or amplified by Discord? If not, why not?**

As noted above, Discord developed tools to reduce the likelihood that user notifications included content that was later removed due to Community Guidelines violations. Discord does evaluate the effectiveness of its filters to understand how it might improve them over time.

b. **For content that has been removed, does Discord disclose whether and the extent to which the removed content was recommended or amplified by Discord? If so, please provide a specific citation to where Discord discloses that information. If not, why not?**

Discord does not disclose this information because Discord does not recommend or amplify content algorithmically in the same ways traditional social networks do.

c. **For content that has been removed, does Discord measure how many views the removed content received after having been recommended or amplified? If not, why not?**

Discord does not measure how many views a single piece of content received because the metric is not relevant to its business. Discord does measure whether a user interacted with a particular notification, but because more than 90 percent of all users are only in servers with 10 or fewer members, "views" are not an

important metric for Discord.

    d. For content that has been removed, does Discord disclose the number of views the removed content received after having been amplified or recommended? If so, please provide a specific citation to where Discord discloses that information. If not, why not?

    No, for the reasons described above.

4. **Does Discord support creating industry-wide transparency requirements to disclose basic safety information, like those included in the *Platform Accountability and Transparency Act*?**

Discord is broadly aligned with the goals of the Platform Accountability and Transparency Act. For example, Discord supports greater transparency around safety information, as exemplified by the disclosures that Discord makes in our quarterly Transparency Reports. We also support efforts to promote research into child and teen safety online. However, we think it is important that transparency measures take account of material differences in the designs of online platforms and services. We look forward to working with the Committee as they explore these issues.

1. **Trust and safety teams are a vital component in combatting the spread of CSAM, hate speech, violence, and other violative content on tech platforms. Despite this, tech companies have time and time again disinvested from their trust and safety team, especially during changes in leadership.**

   a. **How has the size of your trust and safety team changed over the past five years? Please provide numbers for each of the past five years.**

   More than 15 percent of our employees work on safety at Discord. By way of context, that means our Safety team is larger than our Marketing team. In addition to the significant investment we have made in our full-time employees working on these issues, we also work closely with external partners to supplement our own work on critical safety issues.

   2019: 22 full-time employees (FTEs), 1 external partner, approximately 10 external partner agents
   2020: 37 FTEs, 1 external partner, approximately 25 external partner agents
   2021: 81 FTEs, 2 external partners, approximately 65 external partner agents
   2022: 79 FTEs, 3 external partners, 120+ external partner agents
   2023: 90 FTEs, 3 external partners, 250+ external partner agents
   2024: 74 FTEs and over 400 additional contract agents including external, virtual Special Operations Center, other support functions

   b. **Do your trust and safety teams make submissions to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's CyberTipline, or is that a separate unit?**

   Yes, Discord T&S submits reports to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's (NCMEC) CyberTipline when we identify child sexual abuse material or evidence of child sexual exploitation.

   Specifically, this work is the responsibility of our Trust & Safety–Minor Safety and Exploitative Content team. We currently have 17 full-time employees, including three managers.

   c. **If it is a separate unit, how many members are on the team and how have those numbers changed over the past five years. Please provide numbers for each of the past five years.**

   In August 2019 Discord created a dedicated group of six Discord employees to focus on minor safety on the platform—the Minor Safety and Exploitative Content team. Since then, we have grown the team to include 17 dedicated

Discord employees whose sole focus is minor safety and exploitative content.

Additionally, we contract with an external partner that has 134 dedicated agents reviewing a variety of harm types, including non-consensual adult intimate media reports, child sexual abuse material (CSAM) media and grooming reports, and underage user reports.

2. **The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's CyberTipline plays an integral role in combatting child sexual exploitation. The tipline helps law enforcement investigate potential cases and allows prosecutors to bring justice to victims. While federal law requires your company to report to the CyberTipline any apparent violations of federal laws prohibiting child sexual abuse material of which you are aware, there are many gaps.**

   a. **Is there a standard format your reports to the CyberTipline follow? If so, what is that format?**

   We have a template document that aids our team in matching the relevant information (profile attributes, messages, server and channel attributes, etc.) with the CyberTipline's required fields.

   b. **Does your company proactively report planned or imminent offenses?**

   Yes.

   c. **Does your company proactively report potential offenses involving coercion or enticement of children?**

   Yes.

   d. **Does your company proactively report apparent child sex trafficking?**

   Yes.

1. **In recent years, more companies in the tech sector are offering tools to enable caregivers to have a dialogue with minors in their care about healthy and safe internet activity. An important element in understanding whether these tools are helpful is understanding whether or not these tools are being adopted.**

   a. **How many minors are on Discord?**

      As of February 2, 2024 there are approximately 2.7 million monthly active users in the U.S. who submitted an age under the age of 18.

   b. **Of these minors, how many of them have caregivers that have adopted your Family Center tool?**

      Discord's Family Center was designed to provide parents and guardians with tools to better understand how their teens use our service. Our Family Center allows parents and guardians to get insights into the communities their teen children have joined, including which users their teens have recently added as friends, which users their teen has messaged or called in DMs or GDMs, and which servers their teen has joined or participated in. The Family Center also allows parents and guardians to get a weekly email with a high-level summary of the time their teen spends on Discord. The Family Center is designed not just to provide parents and guardians with greater insight into how their teen uses Discord, but to also help parents start conversations with their teen about online safety.

      As of February 2, 2024, there are approximately 15,000 parent users currently connected to approximately 15,500 under-18 users utilizing Discord Family Center. Approximately 2.3 in every one thousand users between the ages of 13 and 18 are connected to a parent or guardian through the tool, and early results indicate that nearly 75 percent of parents who utilize the Family Center at least once continue to become regular users of it.

   c. **How are you ensuring that young people and their caregivers are aware of these tools?**

      Discord prominently features the Family Center as part of users' safety settings. We continue to highlight our Family Center tool prominently within our Safety

Center which includes a special resource hub for parents.

Launching the Family Center was a critical investment for Discord in 2023. Discord engaged in a concerted effort to ensure it was advertising to a parent audience, including working with parent influencers, and to highlight the Family Center in parent-targeted news media, such as Parents.com. Discord also employed a mix of paid advertising (video, podcast ads, influencers, search engine marketing) to educate both teens and parents about the tools Discord creates to help teens stay safe on our platform.

Discord also worked closely with the National PTA in the context of its broader partnership to share updates about this feature through their communication channels, including email updates and social media. We also continue to prominently feature Family Center in Discord's Family Center Hub and as a part of Connect Safely's Parent's Guide to Discord.

d. How are you ensuring that these tools are helpful to both minors and their caregivers?

The goal with Discord's Family Center was to design an easy to use, opt-in tool to help create mutually beneficial ways for parents and teens to have conversations about online safety. Using a QR code, parents and teens are able to easily connect their accounts. Parents are both able to view their teen's recent activity in Family Center and will also receive a weekly summary directly to their inbox. In order to help build trust while also respecting teen autonomy, we do share teen message content with parents. Discord continually reviews the utility of its safety tools to ensure that we are able to meet our obligations with regard to child safety.

2. **In addition to keeping parents informed about the nature of various internet services, there's a lot more we need to do to inform our young people about unsafe, criminal conduct that is facilitated online. While many companies offer a broad range of "user empowerment" tools, it's helpful for us to understand whether young people even find these tools helpful or are actually adopting them.**

   a. **Discord recently rolled out "Teen Safety Assist" which provides teens safety alerts on first time Direct Messaging senders and a sensitive content filter for teens by default. Have you assessed how these features are impacting your minor users' safety online?**

   Discord takes a "safety by design" approach to our work—that means a company-wide commitment to building our service safely by assessing risks,

adopting mitigating measures, and evaluating metrics throughout the product development cycle, not waiting until after a product is launched.

Prior to implementing the Teen Safety Assist features, Discord conducted experiments to help us evaluate the efficacy of these tools. Our internal pre-launch review demonstrated that the safety warning delivered via the Teen Safety Assist tool resulted in a significant increase in user-generated reports from direct messages and an increase in users blocking senders that caused the tool to issue a warning to teen users.

Discord continually reviews the efficacy of its safety tools to ensure that we are able to meet our obligations with regard to child safety.

b. **How are you ensuring that the burden is not on young people to make adult-level decisions about safety on the services that you operate?**

Teens deserve to have a safe, welcoming space to explore their interests, connect with others, and find a place to belong. We're committed to providing a safe, welcoming environment to teens. To do so, we take a multi-faceted and holistic approach to teen safety. This includes:
   - an emphasis on education and learning from mistakes over punishment when appropriate with our Warning System;
   - safety tools and resources that give users, parents, and educators control to customize their Discord experience for themselves or their teens;
   - regularly updating our teen and child safety policies;
   - partnerships with industry-leading organizations like the Family Online Safety Institute, Technology Coalition, National PTA, Digital Wellness Lab, INHOPE, and others;
   - a trusted reporter process that allows trusted partners to surface content and reports of violations directly to our Safety team; and
   - proactive detection and actioning of high-harm content.

We also invest in new ways to detect the exploitation of minors. In October 2023, Discord announced Teen Safety Assist, a series of new features designed to keep teens safe on our platform. One of the tools announced as a part of this new initiative is Sensitive Content Filters, which automatically blur potentially sensitive media sent to teens in direct messages (DMs), group direct messages (GDMs), and in servers. Blurring is enabled by default for teen users both in DMs and GDMs with friends and in servers. In DMs and GDMs with non-friends, potentially sensitive media is blocked by default for teen users. Adult users can

also choose to opt-in to this feature by changing their Privacy & Safety Settings.

Last fall, Discord also launched [Safety Alerts on Senders](#), a tool designed in collaboration with the child safety non-profit Thorn that alerts teen users on Discord when a conversation is potentially unwanted. This new feature is on by default for teen users and helps determine when a DM sent to a teen from an unfamiliar user should trigger the delivery of a safety alert to the teen recipient. The alert encourages teens to think carefully before replying to messages from strangers, allows teen users to block new and unfamiliar senders, and provides a link to safety tips for how teens can best protect themselves online.

On February 6, 2024, Discord announced [Safety Alerts in Chat](#), a new feature also developed in collaboration with Thorn that leverages machine learning algorithms to analyze messages between adults and teenagers. This product aims to identify messages that may be indicative of grooming behaviors. Upon detection, it will notify a teen user about these potentially harmful messages and offer a suite of safety tools, including options to block and report the sender, along with providing advice on dealing with an unwanted situation and encouraging the teen user to take a break from the conversation, reach out to Crisis Text Line for live help, or visit [NoFiltr.org](#) for more resources and safety tips. This new feature will start rolling out in the coming weeks.

    c. **Over the last 4 years, how often have you blocked products from launching because they were not safe enough for children, or withdrawn products from the market after receiving feedback on the harms they were causing?**

Discord takes a "safety by design" approach to our work—that means a company-wide commitment to building our service safely by assessing risks, adopting mitigating measures, and evaluating metrics throughout the product development cycle, not waiting until after a product is launched. We don't track products we have blocked from launching because we build safety into the design of our products from the start.

3. **Existing detection tools for keeping child sexual abuse material from spreading online rely on hashed images of already identified CSAM imagery. There are tools like PhotoDNA and Google's CSAI match tool available for identifying this content. A challenge I hear raised frequently is identifying and removing novel images that have not already been hashed.**

    a. **What would it take to develop better technology to accurately identify and**

limit the spread of novel CSAM images?

The technology industry's work to build robust child safety measures and to expeditiously detect, remove, and report child sexual abuse material (CSAM) content would benefit from the ability to train AI and machine learning models designed to detect CSAM on content that platforms have removed but preserved for law enforcement investigations and reporting to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). Moreover, Discord and industry peers would be better able to collaborate on innovative approaches to detecting CSAM if companies were able to train detection models on content detected on each other's platforms, as scale is critical to the efficacy of these technologies.

b. **Are there interventions from Congress that would facilitate identification of CSAM?**

Congress should ensure that current legislative proposals focused on preventing the distribution of CSAM and fighting child exploitation do not unintentionally divert resources away from innovative efforts by online services to stay ahead of bad actors who work hard to avoid detection or make it harder for law enforcement to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of these egregious crimes. Congress could also explicitly exempt work done by companies to develop technology to detect CSAM from the laws prohibiting creation, possession, and distribution of CSAM.

c. **Based on your company's experience trying to address online sexual exploitation and abuse of minors, are there areas where Congress could be helpful in tackling this problem?**

Congress should provide additional support to NCMEC and should also support and promote the efforts of industry groups and third-party organizations that are dedicated to tackling these issues. For instance, the Tech Coalition is working to strengthen how companies enforce their child safety policies, including through Lantern, a cross-platform signal sharing program.

Congress should also assist federal and state law enforcement units dedicated to child safety issues. These units—which play an essential role in tackling these challenges—are under-funded and under-resourced.

4. **AI models are making it easier to develop synthetic CSAM. These are either altered images of real people, or wholly synthetic individuals. Policymakers are grappling**

with what this will mean for law enforcement efforts to hold perpetrators accountable and identify children who are being harmed. In addition to processing a higher volume of Cybertips, investigators will have the added challenge of determining whether the victim in the scenario is in fact a real person. And cases are already being reported where AI generative technologies are being employed to facilitate the grooming and sextortion of minor victims.

    a. **What are you doing to identify and remove AI-generated CSAM on your services?**

       In addition to our use of industry standard tools to detect and remove known CSAM, Discord invests in developing innovative technologies to proactively identify novel CSAM—images that have not previously been detected and so do not appear in available hash databases. Discord collaborated with industry peers to further develop CLIP, a machine learning image detection and identification algorithm, into a specialized version designed to detect unknown and AI-generated CSAM. In recognition of the industry-wide need to develop and deploy tools to effectively identify novel CSAM, as of October we have made Discord's CSAM-trained CLIP implementation open source, so that we can share our successes with other organizations—without cost—and contribute to the broader fight against CSAM online.

    b. **Do you flag for NCMEC if you perceive the CSAM to be AI-generated?**

       Yes, we report AI-generated CSAM to NCMEC. Additionally we take action against users (and in severe cases may report users to NCMEC) who attempt to prompt AI bots on our service to create CSAM through requests that sexualize children textually.

    c. **How prevalent is this kind of content?**

       Discord's decision to invest in proactively detecting and removing servers before they are reported to us, especially for high-harm categories, has paid dividends in user safety. In 2023 alone, Discord scanned more than 47 billion images, or roughly 130 million images every single day. Images generated through AI models are monitored via the same visual detection system as all other messages and images on the platform. As a result, we scan the attachments stored on Discord for CSAM via hash matching. For instances where the user submits images to modify with AI, the input images are scanned for CSAM as well.

Additionally, images generated through AI models are monitored via the new visual detection tools used to detect unknown and AI-generated CSAM, which Discord built in collaboration with industry peers.

During the fourth quarter of 2023, Discord proactively removed servers for child safety 96 percent of the time; servers in which CSAM was posted were removed proactively 97 percent of the time. Overall, 94 percent of servers removed for policy violations across categories during this period were removed proactively. We continue to invest in our ability to proactively detect and remove servers before they are reported to us, especially for high-harm categories.

At the account level, in the fourth quarter of 2023 Discord reported 55,955 accounts to NCMEC through our use of PhotoDNA and hashing systems such as our visual safety platform, PDQ, and CLIP. 55,638 of those reports were media (images or videos). Additionally, 317 high-harm grooming or endangerment reports were delivered to NCMEC. Discord disabled 116,219 accounts and removed 29,128 servers for child safety during this same period.

d. **How do you anticipate the rise of AI-generated CSAM will impact NCMEC's ability to process and refer Cybertips to law enforcement?**

The proliferation of AI-generated CSAM poses challenges for industry, law enforcement, and civil society. In our work to combat the spread of CSAM online we value our partnership with NCMEC and support efforts to significantly increase NCMEC's funding and resources to address both the increase in Cybertips and the growing complexity of their work.

e. **Recently, A.I.–generated explicit images of a major pop superstar were distributed widely online without her consent. That story drew attention to a growing problem over the last year facilitated by AI tools: the generation of deepfake, nonconsensual, sexually explicit imagery of everyday people, including our young people. Will you commit to reporting on the prevalence of this new problem and the steps your company is taking to address this horrendous abuse?**

Discord's Community Guidelines prohibit the posting of sexually explicit or sexually suggestive content of other people without the subject's knowledge and consent. This includes the non-consensual distribution of intimate media that was created either with or without an individual's consent.

Technological challenges currently frustrate the ability to distinguish accurately between actual and AI-generated non-consensual sexual explicit images, and thus to collect data and report on the prevalence of violative content that is AI-generated.

f. **Are there technical or legal barriers that your company has identified preventing thorough redteaming of AI models to ensure they do not generate CSAM?**

While there are no strict legal barriers, there is no explicit exemption to the laws prohibiting the creation, possession, and distribution of CSAM for the work conducted by companies engaging in redteaming of AI models.

5. **How companies choose to allocate their resources illustrates their true priorities.**

   a. **What percentage of your company's budget is dedicated to addressing child safety on your platform?**

   Discord's budget is not organized in a manner which allows it to determine funding dedicated to solely addressing online child safety-related components, but substantial resources from Trust & Safety, Engineer, Legal, Policy, and other teams work towards addressing this issue.

   b. **What process or assessment of risk on the platform informed that figure?**

   Discord annually undertakes a holistic budgeting process in order to maximize the impact of its resourcing across its company priorities, including Trust & Safety.

   c. **How many layers of leadership separate your trust and safety leaders from you?**

   None: John Redgrave is Discord's Vice President in charge of Trust & Safety and leads a cross-functional Safety team. John reports to Clint Smith, Discord's Chief Legal Officer, and Clint is responsible for our Law, Policy, and Safety functions and reports directly to me.

6. **The companies represented at the hearing have the money and resources to hire teams of Trust & Safety professionals and build bespoke tools to aid with content moderation and integrity work as well as the detection of content like CSAM on their services. This is not necessarily the case for the rest of the tech sector. These**

are industry-wide problems and will demand industry-wide professionalization and work.

    a. **What is Discord currently doing to support access to open-source trust & safety tools for the broader tech ecosystem?**

Discord is a funder and supporter of an open source tooling hub for technology that promotes online safety, an initiative that aims to make online safety tools broadly available to all platforms. Information on this can be found in this [recent announcement](#) from Columbia University. As part of the Columbia initiative, Clint Smith, Discord Chief Legal Officer who is responsible for Law, Policy & Safety, explained that: "Technology that improves online safety should never be one company's competitive advantage, but should be shared for the common good. That's why Discord strongly endorses taking a more structured approach to the development and distribution of open source Safety technology, and we're proud to join with Google and leading philanthropic organizations to support [Columbia's] work to advance this vision—for the benefit of society and the industry."

A recent example of success in this area is Discord's development of innovative technology to proactively identify novel CSAM—images that have not previously been detected and so do not appear in available hash databases. Discord collaborated with industry peers to further develop CLIP, a machine learning image detection and identification algorithm, into a specialized version designed to detect unknown and AI-generated CSAM. In recognition of the industry-wide need to develop and deploy tools to effectively identify novel CSAM, as of October we have made Discord's CSAM-trained CLIP implementation open source and available through the Tech Coalition, so that we can share our successes with other organizations—without cost—and contribute to the broader fight against CSAM online. By leveraging these tools, Discord's model had an 87 percent increase in recall, i.e. proactively-detected confirmed positive CSAM.

7. **One necessary element of keeping our kids safe is preventing harms in the first place. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children partnered with the White House, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Homeland Security to create "The Safety Pledge" initiative to combat online child exploitation in September 2020. I understand more government backed public awareness campaigns are being developed.**

    a. **Are you partnering with the federal government to distribute health and**

safety resources to young people?

No.

b. What are you proactively doing to educate the minors that use your services about online health and safety?

Discord's work with parents and parent-led organizations is vital to our child safety efforts. Since 2022, Discord has been a sponsor of the National PTA. Discord collaborates with National PTA on digital safety resources and events designed to elevate youth voices and foster shared understanding among teens, caregivers and educators. The [PTA Connected: Build Up and Belong program](), sponsored by Discord, facilitates technology discussions between teens and their parents and caregivers about online safety topics. In 2023, 25 local PTAs were selected to receive $1,250 each, sponsored by Discord, to host a [PTA Connected: Build Up and Belong program](). Discord also sponsored grants for this program in [2022]().

Discord is also a member of the Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI). FOSI develops [resources]() to provide parents and guardians with the tools they need to confidently navigate the online world with their families.

Discord also supports [ConnectSafely](), a non-profit organization that educates people about online safety, privacy, security, and digital wellness. ConnectSafely has developed research-based safety tips, as well as in-depth guides and "quick-guides" for parents, educators, youth, and policymakers. Discord worked with ConnectSafely to develop a [Parent's Guide to Discord]().

In recognition of the unique safety challenges that accompany teens' use of the internet, Discord has also created special features designed to give parents and teens even more control over their experience on Discord. The [Family Center]() was designed to provide parents and guardians with tools to better understand how their teens use our service. Our Family Center allows parents to get insights into the communities their teen children have joined, including which users their teens have recently added as friends, which users their teen has messaged or called in DMs or GDMs, and which servers their teen has joined or participated in. The Family Center also allows parents to get a weekly email with a high-level summary of the time their teen spends on Discord. The Family Center is designed not just to provide parents and guardians with greater insight into how their teen uses Discord, but to also help parents start conversations with their teen about

online safety.

As part of our Safer Internet Day efforts in 2023 we partnered with [NoFiltr](#), the youth-targeted online safety program by Thorn, to develop online safety resources for young people. These [resources](#) included an interactive quiz, online fortune teller, and a social media campaign aimed at supporting healthy digital habits and online safety.

Finally, we invest heavily in [advanced tooling and education](#) so parents know how our service works and understand the controls that can contribute to creating a positive and safe experience on Discord for their children. Discord also continues to innovate our approach to child safety. As described above, our recently announced Teen Safety Assist initiative contains new tools to keep teens safe on Discord: Sensitive Content Filters and Safety Alerts for Senders are already in place and working to make Discord a safer place for teens; Safety Alerts in Chat will be rolled out in the coming weeks.

In addition, we strive to understand what is top of mind for teens and to build safety tools and resources that resonate with their lived experiences. In 2023, as a part of Safer Internet Day, we released a [fortune teller](#) with questions and icebreaker prompts to help jump start a conversation about better digital health and safer online practices.

8. **Sextortion has become increasingly prevalent. Offenders may use grooming techniques or basic trickery to manipulate victims into providing nude or partially nude images of themselves, which are then used to coerce victims into sending more graphic images and videos or pay a ransom. These criminals often threaten to post the images or sensitive images publicly or send them to the victim's friends and family if the child does not comply. From May 2022 to October 2022, U.S. law enforcement and NCMEC witnessed an alarming increase in Cybertips and reports where minors have been sextorted for money. Many young boys, including in California, have committed suicide out of desperation, leaving their loved ones devastated.**

   a. **How is your company responding to the growing threat of financial sextortion?**

      As with our efforts to prevent and disrupt the dissemination of CSAM, Discord's approach to child safety more broadly leverages a mix of both proactive detection and reactive measures, supported by a range of human-powered and technical

solutions. Examples relevant to the issue of sextortion include Discord's Safety Alerts for teen users, which are designed to detect unwanted interactions via text message and better equip teens to safely navigate such situations.

In October 2023, Discord announced [Teen Safety Assist](#), a series of new features designed to keep teens safe on our platform. Among the tools announced as a part of this new initiative are [Safety Alerts on Senders](#), a tool designed in collaboration with the child safety non-profit Thorn that alerts teen users on Discord when a conversation is potentially unwanted. This new feature is on by default for teen users and helps determine when a DM sent to a teen from an unfamiliar user should trigger the delivery of a safety alert to the teen recipient. The alert encourages teens to think carefully before replying to messages from strangers, allows teen users to block new and unfamiliar senders, and provides a link to safety tips for how teens can best protect themselves online.

On February 6, 2024, Discord announced [Safety Alerts in Chat](#), a new feature also developed in collaboration with Thorn, which leverages machine learning algorithms to analyze messages between adults and teenagers. This product aims to identify messages that may be indicative of grooming behaviors. Upon detection, it will notify teenagers about these potentially harmful messages and offer a suite of safety tools, including options to block and report the sender, along with providing advice on dealing with an unwanted situation and encouraging the teen user to take a break from the conversation, reach out to Crisis Text Line for live help, or visit [NoFiltr.org](#) for more resources and safety tips. This new feature will start rolling out in the coming weeks.

Additionally, Discord has also invested in staffing a dedicated team housed under our Trust & Safety Minor Exploitative Content team whose sole focus is addressing high-harm sextortion activity on the platform.

b. **What methods are in place to detect and disrupt this type of abuse in real time?**

Please see the answer to the preceding question.

c. **What kind of user education and awareness are you engaged in?**

As described in detail in response to question 7(b), Discord's user education and awareness efforts include our partnerships with and support of parent- and guardian-led organizations, our direct outreach to parents and guardians to explain

how Discord works and the parental controls available to them, and our work to build new safety features for our teen users, such as those announced as a part of our Teen Safety Assist initiative.

d. **Are you aware of a higher prevalence of sexual extortion or abuse against certain demographics among young users? If not, will you commit to studying this issue and making that kind of information available to improve public education and protection measures?**

Discord is not aware of a prevalence of sexual extortion or abuse targeting certain demographics among young users. Discord continually reviews the efficacy and utility of its safety tools to ensure that the tools we deploy take proper measure of the online safety threats currently facing teens. Discord is committed to continued collaboration with industry peers to best confront these challenges.

9. **Young people need to be at the center of regulatory discussions, and they need to be at the table as products and services they use are designed.**

a. **Are you engaging young adults and youth in your conversations and policies around Trust and Safety on the platform?**

We strive to understand what is top of mind for teens and to build safety tools and resources that resonate with their lived experiences. We have also recently launched a [Teen Charter](#) project. As part of this effort, we are working with experts and youth councils and running our own focus groups to develop an aspirational charter that will help us both understand how teens want to feel on Discord and informs the ways we build new products and features to keep them safe on the platform. For example, Discord engaged with the NoFiltr Youth Innovation Council on the Teen Charter project as well as our broader teen safety efforts to better understand teen attitudes and concerns on topics related to online safety. In addition, Discord seeks to collaborate with groups, such as Digital Wellness Lab, that prioritize youth participation.

b. **How do you proactively keep up to speed with the most pressing issues facing young people online?**

Discord's Teen Charter project is designed to help us stay up to speed on the issues young people face online. We also follow the latest research in this space and engage with experts such as Digital Wellness Lab and Tech Coalition to ensure we are constantly updating our approach. We have hired a teen safety

policy manager and mental health policy manager to further aid in work.

10. **For many children, an open dialogue about their internet habits is a best practice, and healthy. But not every child has a parent or a caregiver that is looking out for their best interest. For many kids who are abused, a caregiver or parent is their abuser. Additionally, for many young people, their parents' knowledge of their sexual orientation or their interest in exploring it, fundamentally puts them in jeopardy. Solving for these different needs across our young people at the scale of social media and internet applications is really vital.**

    a. **How have you designed your parental tools with this dynamic in mind?**

        The [Family Center](#) was designed to provide parents and guardians with tools to better understand how their teens use our service. Our Family Center allows parents and guardians to get insights into the communities their teen children have joined, including which users their teens have recently added as friends, which users their teen has messaged or called in DMs or GDMs, and which servers their teen has joined or participated in. The Family Center also allows parents to get a weekly email with a high-level summary of the time their teen spends on Discord. The Family Center is designed not just to provide parents and guardians with greater insight into how their teen uses Discord, but to also help parents start conversations with their teen about online safety.

Senator Laphonza Butler
Senate Judiciary Committee
Questions for the Record
Jason Citron, Co-Founder and CEO, Discord Inc.

1. **Family and parental control tools: I was glad to hear that you have spent time talking with parents and what their families need from your products. I was also glad to hear your companies have a Family Center, or other similar tools, to give parents more insight and control over how their children are using your platforms and apps.**

   a. **How do you advertise this feature to parents?**

      Discord prominently features the Family Center as part of users' safety settings. We continue to highlight our Family Center tool prominently within our Safety Center which includes a special resource hub for parents.

      Launching the Family Center was a critical investment for Discord in 2023. Discord engaged in a concerted effort to ensure it was advertising to a parent audience, including working with parent influencers, and to highlight the Family Center in parent-targeted news media, such as Parents.com. Discord also employed a mix of paid advertising (video, podcast ads, influencers, search engine marketing) to educate both teens and parents about the tools Discord creates to help teens stay safe on our platform.

      Discord also worked closely with the National PTA in the context of its broader partnership to share updates about this feature through their communication channels, including email updates and social media. We also continue to prominently feature Family Center in Discord's Family Center Hub and as a part of Connect Safely's Parent's Guide to Discord.

   b. **Can you share data on how many Family Center/parental tools users there are in proportion to total minors on your platforms and products?**

      As of February 2, 2024, there are approximately 15,000 parent users currently connected to approximately 15,500 under-18 users utilizing Discord Family Center. Approximately 2.3 in every one thousand users between the ages of 13 and 18 are connected to a parent or guardian through the tool, and early results indicate that nearly 75 percent of parents who utilize the Family Center at least once continue to become regular users of it.

Please answer each question to the fullest possible extent. If your platform is unable to answer a particular question or does not have requested data, explain why. Each question refers to your company in addition to any corporate affiliates, including parent and subsidiary companies.

1. **Current law requires that a provider of a report of suspected CSAM to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's (NCMEC) CyberTipline preserve "any visual depictions, data, or other digital files that are reasonably accessible and may provide context or additional information about the reported material or person" for a minimum of 90 days. 18 U.S.C. 2258A(h)(1-2). The recent explosion of suspected abuse has presented unprecedented challenges for law enforcement to follow up on leads before companies discard or delete essential data and information. There is nothing preventing tech companies from preserving relevant material beyond the statutorily-mandated 90-day period.**

   a. **How long does Discord voluntarily preserve and retain data contained in and related to its reports to the CyberTipline?**

   Discord voluntarily preserves content reported to NCMEC's CyberTipline for 2 years.

   b. **The massive influx of reports to the CyberTipline naturally results in law enforcement entities having to conduct and finish investigations beyond 90 days of an initial report to the CyberTipline. Retaining relevant information for longer periods could significantly advance law enforcement's ability to thoroughly investigate leads. If Discord only preserves and retains this information for the minimum 90-day period, why does it do so when preserving this data longer could significantly enhance and prolong law enforcement's ability to investigate and prosecute child predators?**

   Discord voluntarily preserves content reported to NCMEC's CyberTipline for 2 years.

   c. **Please confirm if Discord stores and retains the following information relating to reports to the CyberTipline:**

      i.   **IP addresses**

          Yes.

      ii.   **Screen Names**

          Yes.

      iii.   **User Profiles**

          Yes.

      iv.   **Associated Screennames (by IP address and associated emails)**

          Yes.

      v.   **Email addresses**

          Yes, where available.

      vi.   **Geolocation data**

          Discord does not collect geolocation data.

d. If Discord does not retain or store any of the above types of information in question (c), please explain why.

Discord does not collect geolocation data, and thus does not retain geolocation data.

e. Please list any other information Discord retains and preserves for law enforcement purposes not listed above in question (c).

When an account is preserved for law enforcement purposes, all relevant content associated with the account is captured at the time of the preservation and retained.

f. Does Discord flag screennames and associated email addresses to suspected accounts that violate Discord's terms of service?

Under certain circumstances Discord will proactively preserve and disclose information to law enforcement, including screennames and associated email addresses. These circumstances are generally for emergency situations when we possess a good faith belief that there is an imminent risk of serious physical injury or death.

2. **How does Discord prioritize urgent requests for information from law enforcement and what is Discord's response time to urgent requests?**

Discord reviews and responds to all legal requests from law enforcement in a timely manner. We comply with valid legal process before any indicated due date and communicate with law enforcement on the status of their request. For emergency disclosure requests, Discord strives to respond within 15 minutes and have a full resolution within an hour of receipt.

3. **What is Discord's average response time to service of legal process from law enforcement for CSAM-related information?**

Discord reviews and responds to all legal requests from law enforcement in a timely manner. We comply with valid legal process before any indicated due date regardless of the related crime. Notably, law enforcement requests do not necessarily specify whether the information sought is related to a child sexual abuse material (CSAM) investigation. Discord is unable to disaggregate CSAM-related process from other legal process from law enforcement and as such cannot provide a response to this portion of the question.

4. **In 2023, the tech industry as a whole slashed more than 260,000 jobs. And in the first four weeks of this year, another 25,000 jobs were cut.**

   a. **For each year, between 2018 and 2023, how many U.S. based employees did you have at Discord?**

   2018: 151 U.S. based employees
   2019: 217 U.S. based employees
   2020: 308 U.S. based employees
   2021: 669 U.S. based employees
   2022: 1,008 U.S. based employees
   2023: 1,126 U.S. based employees

   i. **Of these employees, how many were sponsored on H-1B visas?**

2018: 2 employees were newly sponsored on H-1B visas
2019: 3 employees were newly sponsored on H-1B visas
2020: 3 employees were newly sponsored on H-1B visas
2021: 12 employees were newly sponsored on H-1B visas
2022: 26 employees were newly sponsored on H-1B visas
2023: 9 employees were newly sponsored on H-1B visas

ii. **For each year, between 2018 and 2023, how many H1-B visa applications did Discord submit?**

Below includes applications submitted, including extensions and amendments to applications. This also includes applications where the individual ultimately did not join the company.

2018: 5
2019: 3
2020: 4
2021: 15
2022: 30
2023: 17

b. **For each year, between 2018 and 2023, how many employees based outside the U.S. did you have at Discord?**

2018: 0
2019: 0
2020: 0
2021: 6 employees outside the U.S.
2022: 35 employees outside the U.S.
2023: 41 employees outside the U.S.

i. **Of these employees, how many were based in China?**

0.

c. **For each year, between 2018 and 2023, how many employees in total did Discord terminate, fire, or lay off?**

2018: 6 employees were involuntarily separated
2019: 9 employees were involuntarily separated

2020: 9 employees were involuntarily separated
2021: 10 employees were involuntarily separated
2022: 38 employees were involuntarily separated
2023: 95 employees were involuntarily separated

    i. **Of these employees, how many were based in the United States?**

        2018: 6 U.S. employees
        2019: 9 U.S. employees
        2020: 9 U.S. employees
        2021: 10 U.S. employees
        2022: 37 U.S. employees
        2023: 90 U.S. employees

    ii. **Did Discord fill these newly vacant positions with employees sponsored on H1-B visas? If so, how many?**

        No.

    iii. **Were any duties and/or functions previously performed by laid-off employees transferred to or performed at any point by employees sponsored on H1-B visas? If so, which duties and/or functions?**

        Discord does not have a system by which individual duties and functions of previous employees are tracked upon their departure and thus cannot answer this question.

d. **For each year, between 2018 and 2023, how many employees performing work related to child safety did Discord terminate, fire, or lay off?**

2018: 0
2019: 0
2020: 2 employees were involuntarily separated
2021: 0
2022: 0
2023: 1 employee was involuntarily separated

    i. **Of these employees, how many were based in the United States?**

        2018: 0

2019: 0
2020: 2
2021: 0
2022: 0
2023: 1

ii. **Did Discord fill these newly vacant positions with employees sponsored on H1-B visas? If so, how many?**

No.

iii. **Were any duties and/or functions (specifically relating to child safety) previously performed by laid-off employees transferred to or performed at any point by employees sponsored on H1-B visas? If so, which duties and/or functions?**

Discord does not have a system by which individual duties and functions of previous employees are tracked upon their departure and thus cannot answer this question.

iv. **How have layoffs impacted Discord's ability to protect children on its platforms?**

Notwithstanding Discord's recent reduction in force, the percentage of employees working on safety at Discord remains unchanged. More than 15 percent of our employees continue to work on safety at Discord. By way of context, that means our Safety team is larger than our Marketing team. In addition to the significant investment we have made in our full-time employees working on these issues, we also work closely with external partners to supplement our own work on critical safety issues.

v. **Does Discord have any plans to increase staff responsible for child safety operations or otherwise optimize its child safety operations?**

Minor safety is a top priority for Discord's Trust & Safety team, and we have shifted resources and internal subject matter experts to focus on keeping teens safe on our platform. Minor Safety is the largest single team inside of Discord's broader Trust & Safety team, with over 20 percent of our total full-time employees and 40 percent of our external partners working in this area.

5. **On January 30, 2024, the Tech Transparency Project (TTP) published an [article](#) on their website called, "Meta Approves Harmful Teen Ads with Images from its Own AI Tool". In summary, TTP, using Meta's "Imagine with Meta AI" tool generated inappropriate images such as young people at a pill party or other vaping. These images with text were submitted to Facebook as advertisements targeting users between ages 13-17 in the United States. TTP reported that Facebook approved the advertisement, despite it violating its own policies, in less than five minutes to run on the following platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, and Meta Quest. Meta. Over the course of a week, TTP submitted the advertisements with the same end result: Facebook approving them. TTP reported that they canceled these advertisements before their scheduled publication, but it illustrated the repeated failures of Facebook to properly moderate content. This is just one example of what other non-government organizations and others have uncovered across social media platforms.**

    a. **How often a month do Discord employees conduct quality checks on Discord's policies and safeguards for child accounts?**

    Discord conducts quality assurance on actions taken by employees with respect to user violations (i.e., we have quality control measures in place to ensure our decisions are correct). Our Policy team generally reviews and updates our Community Guidelines once a year, consistently updates platform guidelines to meet industry standards for child safety, including updating policies for violative generative AI images, and we publish those updates in Discord blog posts.

    b. **In which departments, components, or units of the company does Discord have staff dedicated to performing this type of work?**

    Our T&S team has quality assurance (QA) standards set by a dedicated T&S QA team. We have QA specialists that verify actions taken by full-time employees (FTEs), an Appeals team to verify correct actions taken through the appeals process, and a QA team dedicated to examining the quality of actions taken by our external partners. The external partners have internal QA teams (separate from Discord teams) that ensure actions taken are up to standards we have set across T&S.

    The information provided above does not include employees on cross-functional teams that contribute to trust and safety, including engineering, marketing, policy, legal support, and more who work on child safety and safety more broadly.

c. **How many employees make up these departments, components, or units?**

Discord has 2 full-time employees dedicated to quality assurance checks of our external partners. More than 20 percent of our Trust & Safety full-time employees are involved in QA to some extent. In total, we have 74 FTEs in T&S at Discord.

The information provided above does not include employees on cross-functional teams that contribute to trust and safety, including engineering, marketing, policy, legal support, and more who work on child safety and safety more broadly.

d. **If a violation is found, what action is taken, and how quickly is action taken?**

Discord continually reviews the efficacy of its own internal processes and procedures to ensure that we are able to meet our obligations with regard to child safety. Where the business determines that our work has not followed established internal processes, we work quickly to take corrective action.

6. **Social media companies claim they are investing in company components dedicated to safety, and that their platforms are safe for children. However, children continue to be exploited daily across these platforms.**

a. **What have Discord's revenue and profit figures been for the last three years (2021-2023)? Please provide figures broken out per year. Do not provide percentages.**

Discord is a private company and does not publish or share revenue figures publicly. We'd be happy to provide these figures to your office confidentially.

b. **How much has Discord spent in advertising for the last three years (2021-2023), broken out per year?**

2021: $31.0M
2022: $5.1M
2023: $2.3M

c. **How much of Discord's resources spent on advertising has been devoted to advertising Discord's safety initiatives and efforts for the last three years (2021-2023), broken out per year?**

Prior to 2023 Discord did not disaggregate resources spent on advertising based

on the initiatives they applied to and thus cannot provide numbers prior to 2023. In 2023, Discord spent $1.7M on advertising devoted to Discord's safety initiatives and efforts.

d. **To get an understanding of how your company has invested and plans to invest in its components dedicated to child safety functions, what are the annual budgets for Discord's child safety-related components for the last three years (2021-2023)?**

Discord does not track its budget allocation in this way and cannot provide historic budget allocations related only to child safety functions. More than 15 percent of our employees continue to work on safety at Discord. By way of context, that means our Safety team is larger than our Marketing team. In addition to the significant investment we have made in our full-time employees working on these issues, we also work closely with external partners to supplement our own work on critical safety issues.

e. **What is the current anticipated (2024) budget for Discord's child safety-related components?**

Discord's budget is not organized in a manner which allows it to determine funding dedicated to solely addressing online child safety-related components, but substantial resources from Trust & Safety, Engineer, Legal, Policy, and other teams work towards addressing this issue.

f. **Provide the number of staff employed in Discord's child safety-related components for the last three years (2021-2023).**

Discord does not track staff allocation in a way that allows us to answer this question at this level of granularity. More than 15 percent of our employees continue to work on safety at Discord. By way of context, that means our Safety team is larger than our Marketing team. In addition to the significant investment we have made in our full-time employees working on these issues, we also work closely with external partners to supplement our own work on critical safety issues.

g. **How much is that compared to Discord's other components for the same period? (Please provide a breakout per year. Do not provide percentages.)**

Discord does not track staff allocation in a way that allows us to answer this

question at this level of granularity. More than 15 percent of our employees continue to work on safety at Discord. By way of context, that means our Safety team is larger than our Marketing team. In addition to the significant investment we have made in our full-time employees working on these issues, we also work closely with external partners to supplement our own work on critical safety issues.

h. **How many staff are currently employed in Discord's child safety-related components?**

18 FTEs—nearly 20 percent of our total T&S employees—are dedicated to our Minor Safety efforts. Nearly 40 percent, or approximately 158 external partner agents, of our external partners are directly involved with child safety reports. These numbers do not include other employees and individuals who contribute to Discord's child safety-related components more broadly, including product managers, engineers, data scientists, and other cross-functional roles that work on child safety either full- or part-time.

i. **What are the roles, responsibilities, and functions of Discord's child safety-related components?**

Discord has subject matter experts dedicated to proactive investigations, responding to user reports, handling escalations from our external partners, outreach to industry peers and partners, collaborating with law enforcement and government notices, building industry standard quality assurance requirements across FTEs and external partner agents, building new technologies in collaboration with our engineering and machine learning teams, and informing and evolving our products and policies in consultation with users, their parents and guardians, and industry experts.

Beyond the individuals dedicated to the above components, many more employees also play an important role in Discord's child safety work. Product and engineering teams develop tools like Teen Safety Assist and Family Center to help keep teens safe, Data Science monitors and assesses the effectiveness of our features and efforts, Policy maintains Discord's policies regarding child safety to ensure alignment with current best practices, and Legal evaluates Discord's legal obligations around child safety.

j. **Are any other components responsible for the monitoring of CSAM on Discord's platform(s)?**

In 2023, Discord T&S built a virtual security operations center (vSOC) to help monitor the platform for threats, risks, and violations (including CSAM). We work with various partners and vendors who help provide additional signal for potential violations on the platform. Our engineering and machine learning teams are focused on building new and evolving existing technologies for detection and prevention of CSAM on Discord.

k. What, if any, third parties does Discord employ or contract with to address CSAM material on its platforms?

Discord works with a leading service provider who specializes in content moderation. Specifically, we worked with them to create a dedicated Minor Safety and Exploitative Content team to specialize and address child safety issues such as CSAM and grooming on the platform.

i. What are the roles and responsibilities of these third parties?

Discord's service provider's dedicated Minor Safety and Exploitative Content team works with us to analyze, investigate, and enforce outcomes of all child safety-related reports.

This includes:
- Reviewing reported media content (images and videos) to determine whether the content contains CSAM to either report to NCMEC or to escalate to an internal team member for a full investigation on real-world harm;
- Reviewing reported conversations between users or groups of users to determine whether the content contains a (present or not present) child being groomed, sexualized, extorted/threatened, or self-endangered to either perform enforcement actions or escalate to an internal team member for a full investigation on real-world harm;
- Reviewing reported conversations between users or groups of users to determine whether a child has previously or will be groomed, sexualized, extorted/threatened, or self-endangered by an adult user to escalate to an internal team member for a full investigation on real-world harm.

ii. What is the breakdown of cost per third party over the last three

years (2021-2023)?

Discord contractual costs during the years in question are:

2021: $0
2022: $217,600
2023: $1.4M

7. **Of all reports sent by Discord to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, how many reports were self-generated from victim users for the last three years (2021-2023)? Please provide the actual number of self-generated reports in addition to the total number of reports (including those that were not self-generated). In addition, please provide a break-down of the self-reporters by age.**

In 2023, Discord added a feature to its internal reporting system that allowed us to track CSAM submitted to NCMEC that our Trust & Safety team determined to be self-generated CSAM (SG-CSAM). Prior to 2023, our systems did not track these reports as a distinct subset, and so we are unable to share pre-2023 SG-CSAM data here.

- SG-CSAM Reported to NCMEC (starting in January 2023): 1,519 reports
- All CSAM Reported to NCMEC (2021-2023): 211,426

8. **What is Discord's policy or protocol with respect to law enforcement accessing user data and subsequent notification to users of law enforcement accessing their data?**

As an electronic communication service provider, Discord strictly complies with the provisions of the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA), and discloses information to law enforcement in accordance with the provisions of the statute. With regard to user notice, Discord would not provide a user with notice when we receive an order prohibiting us from doing so. Moreover, if the legal process pertains to child sexual exploitation or the danger of death or serious bodily injury, Discord does not provide notice to help avoid a harmful or dangerous outcome resulting from the notice.

Discord does not notify users when it receives a 90-day preservation order under the provisions of existing law. See 18 USC 2703(f). Thus, after sending a preservation order to Discord, law enforcement always has 90 days to secure proper legal process, including a non-disclosure order, while relevant materials are preserved.

Additionally, if Discord receives legal process without a prior preservation order and

without a non-disclosure order, even in cases where Discord intends to provide notice to a user, we would first alert law enforcement of this plan and allow law enforcement to withdraw the subpoena or delay its enforcement until a non-disclosure order can be obtained. This policy effectively ensures that users are not notified of legal process in circumstances where law enforcement wants to prevent such notification. More information on Discord's practices can be found in this article: [How Discord Works With Law Enforcement](#).

    a. **Do certain crimes such as drug trafficking or child exploitation affect Discord's decision to notify a user whose data is accessed by law enforcement?**

    Yes. Discord will not notify users in investigations involving child sexual exploitation or the danger of death or serious bodily injury. Discord takes seriously its responsibility to balance the privacy rights of its users and their ability to properly challenge legal process with the legitimate investigatory needs of law enforcement and the safety of the public.

    b. **Do certain requests such as a subpoena or search warrant affect Discord's notification protocol? If so, what are they?**

    Discord does not provide notice if we are prohibited by law, such as through a non-disclosure order, or in cases involving exceptional circumstances such as child sexual exploitation investigations or threat to life emergencies. The more detail provided to us, the more easily we can apply these exceptions.

    c. **If Discord does notify users of law enforcement accessing their data, why does Discord find this necessary?**

    Discord balances users' right to challenge legal process with the legitimate investigatory needs of law enforcement and the safety of the public. User notification is not only a best practice in the provider community, but also important to allow third-parties to better protect their confidential information when appropriate to do so. As noted above, Discord does not provide notice if we are prohibited by law, such as through a non-disclosure order, or in cases involving exceptional circumstances such as child sexual exploitation investigations or threat to life emergencies.

9. **The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has indicated that reports from social media companies tend to lack actionable information causing law**

enforcement to be burdened with incomplete information. How comprehensive are Discord's reports to NCMEC? What challenges is Discord experiencing on the collection of user data and other information to include in its reports to NCMEC? What actions is Discord taking to make its reports more comprehensive and useful to law enforcement?

Discord's reports to NCMEC via their application programming interface contain all fields required by NCMEC for their reporting.

Discord's manual reporting (which is often related to potential grooming) process is designed to provide NCMEC an actionable summary of the context giving rise to the report. Agents review archives for both the reported user and potential child victim, investigate and report all relevant discussions between those parties, and report on anywhere we observe age statements from the parties involved in the exchange and any continuing sexual discussions after the reported user was made aware the individual they were engaging with was likely a minor.

Additionally, we review feedback from law enforcement officers that voluntarily disclose the disposition of cases stemming from CyberTip reports filed with NCMEC by Discord. These are emailed to Discord at a monthly cadence and we review reports to ensure that all necessary information for law enforcement was disclosed in the original report.

1. **Currently, Discord restricts certain content from accounts that belong to minors. However, the only age verification measure that Discord undertakes to ascertain the age of its users is asking new users to enter their birthdate when they open an account. How do you prevent minors from creating an account as an adult by lying about their age?**

    When an individual attempts to register a new account, Discord requires the individual to enter their date of birth through a neutral age gate. If the individual provides a date of birth indicating that they are under 13 years old, Discord does not permit the individual to register an account and instead presents a notice screen informing the individual that they are "unable to register." If the individual selects "Back to Login," they are shown the typical registration landing screen and if they select "Register," they are once again shown the "unable to register" notice without being provided an opportunity to make up a new birthdate or attempt to re-register. Discord provides additional information to the public about why the service asks for individuals' date of birth in a published Trust & Safety article.

    Discord also takes steps to confirm that registered users are 18 years of age or older when they attempt to join an "age-restricted" server or channel. As outlined in the Community Guidelines, users must be age 18 or older to participate in communities containing adult content on Discord and servers and channels organized around adult content or age-restricted themes (e.g., violent content) must be labeled as age-restricted. When a user first attempts to join an age-restricted server or channel, Discord implements an extra layer of protection, through an age-restricted warning or gate.

    Discord also investigates and verifies a user's age in situations where either (i) the user, within the platform, admits that they are underage or (ii) Discord receives a credible report, supported by clear and convincing evidence, that the user is underage. For instance, Discord sometimes receives communications allegedly from a parent or guardian asserting that their underage child has a Discord account. Discord's Trust & Safety team takes these reports seriously and follows processes for investigating such reports and, where appropriate, verifying the user's age and disabling the user's account if we determine that the user is under 13.

    Finally, Discord undertakes efforts to identify a user's age when a user whose account has been banned for being underage submits an appeal. Discord employs a rigorous verification process for investigating and arbitrating such appeals with an emphasis on giving the user (or their parent) an opportunity to definitively prove that the user is age 13 or older, while leaving properly executed bans in place.

2. **Digital sextortion is a growing epidemic on all social media platforms. Several victims of sextortion were approached by predators on your platform. You have increased the number of employees tasked with child safety, and you automatically report suspected grooming to NCMEC. How do you ensure that these predators cease contacting minors? How do you catch these situations before a predator attempts to get the minor to move to another platform?**

As with our efforts to prevent and disrupt the dissemination of child sexual abuse material (CSAM), Discord's approach to child safety more broadly leverages a mix of both proactive detection and reactive measures, supported by a range of human-powered and technical solutions. Examples relevant to the issue of sextortion include Discord's Safety Alerts for teen users, which are designed to detect unwanted interactions via text message and better equip teens to safely navigate such situations.

In October 2023, Discord announced [Teen Safety Assist](), a series of new features designed to keep teens safe on our platform. Among the tools announced as a part of this new initiative are [Safety Alerts on Senders](), a tool designed in collaboration with the child safety non-profit Thorn that alerts teen users on Discord when a conversation is potentially unwanted. This new feature is on by default for teen users and helps determine when a DM sent to a teen from an unfamiliar user should trigger the delivery of a safety alert to the teen recipient. The alert encourages teens to think carefully before replying to messages from strangers, allows teen users to block new and unfamiliar senders, and provides a link to safety tips for how teens can best protect themselves online.

On February 6, 2024, Discord announced [Safety Alerts in Chat](), a new feature also developed in collaboration with Thorn, which leverages machine learning algorithms to analyze messages between adults and teenagers. This product aims to identify messages that may be indicative of grooming behaviors. Upon detection, it will notify teenagers about these potentially harmful messages and offer a suite of safety tools, including options to block and report the sender, along with providing advice on dealing with an unwanted situation and encouraging the teen user to take a break from the conversation, reach out to Crisis Text Line for live help, or visit [NoFiltr.org]() for more resources and safety tips. This new feature will start rolling out in the coming weeks.

Additionally, Discord has also invested in staffing a dedicated team housed under our Trust & Safety Minor Exploitative Content team whose sole focus is addressing high-harm sextortion activity on the platform.

3. **Discord automatically blurs sexual content for minor's accounts, but an independent investigation led by NCOSE found that an image containing sexually explicit material sent from an adult account to a fake minor account was not blurred. What are you doing to ensure these instances do not continue to occur?**

Discord is continuously working to improve and refine our detection capabilities and response strategies in order to further reduce our false negative rate on images such as the one described in the question. We are not aware of the specific timeframe of the NCOSE report, but their analysis may have predated the November 2023 launch of the explicit content filter technology in our Teen Safety Assist feature.

4. **When an adult account sends explicit sexual content to a minor's account, is that content permitted? Is the adult account reported to NCMEC or other law enforcement? Can a blurred image still be received by the minor?**

   This content is not permitted under Discord's Terms of Service or Community Guidelines. All age-restricted content must be labeled and is only permitted to be shared in age-restricted areas that exclude minor users.

   We report all instances where we observe: age statements from the suspected adult (reported user) and suspected child (child victim), which are followed by inappropriate sexual conduct with a child to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) via their CyberTipline as potential grooming instances.

5. **How does Discord inform parents when a child is exposed to sexual material? How does Discord inform parents when their child is the target of grooming?**

   In recognition of the unique safety challenges that accompany teens' use of the Internet, Discord has created special features designed to give parents and teens even more control over their experience on Discord. Discord does not always possess the information necessary to contact the parents or guardians of teen Discord users, however our Family Center was designed to provide parents and guardians with tools to better understand how their teens use our service. The Family Center allows parents to get insights into the communities their teen children have joined, including which users their teens have recently added as friends, which users their teen has messaged or called in DMs or GDMs, and which servers their teen has joined or participated in. The Family Center also allows parents to get a weekly email with a high-level summary of the time their teen spends on Discord. The Family Center is designed not just to provide parents and guardians with greater insight into how their teen uses Discord, but to also help parents start conversations with their teen about online safety.

6. **When a person—regardless of age—informs Discord that there is a sexually explicit image of that person being shared on Discord without that person's consent, what is the process that person must go through in order to have that image removed from your platform? What is the average amount of time required for Discord to verify and remove a sexually explicit image after notification?**

   Non-consensual adult intimate media (NCAIM) is not allowed on Discord. A user can report suspected NCAIM to Discord for review. Additionally, we leverage machine learning and artificial intelligence to detect and remove servers devoted to NCAIM. Full-time Discord employees oversee the resolution of cases escalated by our external

partner agents and investigate where NCAIM violations intersect with CSAM and child safety. Our average resolution for NCAIM reports is less than 24 hours.

7. **Discord employs many of the industry standard tools like PhotoDNA and digital "hash" matching. Discord also has engineers dedicated to developing novel methods to detect previously unknown CSAM images. Does Discord attach any identifying marker to nonconsensual images shared on your platform other than those applied by PhotoDNA or similar services? In other words, if a person reports their own nonconsensual image being shared on Discord, what can Discord do to ensure that image cannot be shared in perpetuity?**

At this time, Discord has not implemented digital hash matching for nonconsensual images shared on the platform in violation of our Community Guidelines. However, we continue to evolve our technological capabilities with regard to enforcement of our Community Guidelines.

8. **The 2022 Thorn Report identified that 17 percent of the minors who use Discord have had a sexual interaction through Discord, and 10 percent believed that the person they were interacting with in a sexual way was an adult. What are you doing to make sure that those interactions are eliminated altogether?**

Discord has a policy on teen self-endangerment, an issue that we do not take lightly. We want teen Discord users to be able to express themselves freely while also taking steps to ensure that they don't engage in risky behaviors that could endanger their safety and well-being. In order to help teen users stay safe, our policies state that users under the age of 18 are not allowed to send or access any sexually explicit content, and users over 18 are only allowed to post explicit content in spaces that are behind an age-gate or in DMs or GDMs with users who also are 18 and older. We also believe that teens dating online can result in self-endangerment. Under this policy, teen dating servers are prohibited on Discord, and we will take action against users who are engaging in this behavior.

In October 2023, Discord announced [Teen Safety Assist](), a series of new features designed to keep teens safe on our platform. Among the tools announced as a part of this new initiative are [Sensitive Content Filters](), which automatically blur potentially sensitive media sent to teens in DMs, GDMs, and in servers. Blurring is enabled by default for teen users in DMs and GDMs with friends and in servers. In DMs and GDMs with non-friends, potentially sensitive media is blocked by default for teen users (whereas adult users can choose to opt-in to this feature by changing their Privacy & Safety Settings).

Last fall, Discord also launched [Safety Alerts on Senders](), a tool designed in collaboration with the child safety non-profit Thorn that alerts teen users on Discord when a conversation is potentially unwanted. This new feature is on by default for teen users and helps determine when a DM sent to a teen from an unfamiliar user should trigger the delivery of a safety alert to the teen recipient. The alert encourages teens to think carefully before replying to messages from strangers, allows teen users to block new and

unfamiliar senders, and provides a link to safety tips for how teens can best protect themselves online.

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I.   **Directions**

Please provide a wholly contained answer to each question. A question's answer should not cross-reference answers provided in other questions.

If a question asks for a yes or no answer, please provide a yes or no answer first and then provide subsequent explanation. If the answer to a yes or no question is sometimes yes and sometimes no, please state such first and then describe the circumstances giving rise to each answer.

If a question asks for a choice between two options, please begin by stating which option applies, or both, or neither, followed by any subsequent explanation.

If you disagree with the premise of a question, please answer the question as-written and then articulate both the premise about which you disagree and the basis for that disagreement.

If you lack a basis for knowing the answer to a question, please first describe what efforts you have taken to ascertain an answer to the question and then provide your tentative answer as a consequence of its reasonable investigation. If even a tentative answer is impossible at this time, please state why such an answer is impossible and what efforts you intend to take to provide an answer in the future. Please further give an estimate as to when Senator Cruz will receive that answer.

To the extent that an answer depends on an ambiguity in the question asked, please state the ambiguity you perceive in the question, and provide multiple answers which articulate each possible reasonable interpretation of the question in light of the ambiguity.

II.   **Questions**

1. **In the last two years, has an employee or commissioner of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) requested to evaluate or evaluated your data used for training Large Language Models or algorithms or the sources of such data for bias, discrimination, or misinformation?**

    No.

2. **In the last two years, has an employee or commissioner of the FTC sought details regarding your company's measures related to filtering or blocking inputs and**

outputs of a Large Language Model or algorithms?

No.

    a. **If yes, has the FTC attempted to coerce or otherwise request you to implement input/output filtering in order to allegedly comply with federal law?**

        No.

3. **In the last two years, has an employee or commissioner of the Federal Trade Commission sought to evaluate your company's use of measures, including "prebunking" or "debunking", designed to counteract so called "online misinformation"?**

No.

4. **In June 2022, the FTC released a report titled "Combatting Online Harms Through Innovation." In this report, the FTC discussed how the deployment of AI tools intended to detect or otherwise address harmful online content is accelerating but may never be appropriate as an alternative to human judgment.**

    a. **In the context of protecting children from online harms to what extent does your company rely on automated tools to detect online harm vs. human review? Please be specific.**

        Discord users are encouraged to report content that violates its policies. Reports concerning the highest harm material, including exploitative content and minor safety, extremism, and cybercrime, are prioritized for review and enforcement. Specialists in Discord's Trust & Safety teams are trained to quickly recognize and handle exactly these types of content. In specific circumstances, reports are escalated to a dedicated investigations team, which is empowered not just to investigate specific infractions, but to conduct wider investigations and refer users to law enforcement agencies as appropriate.

        Discord invests in developing innovative technologies, including the use of machine learning and other AI tools, to proactively identify novel child sexual abuse material (CSAM)—images that have not previously been detected and so do not appear in available hash databases. We also invest in new ways to detect the exploitation of minors (commonly referred to as grooming).

i. **Novel CSAM:** Recently, Discord collaborated with industry peers to build and implement a visual safety technology to detect unknown CSAM and AI-generated CSAM with positive results. Effective tools that keep children safe online should be industry standards, not a means for companies to gain a competitive advantage. In recognition of that, as of October, we have made this technology open source, so that we can share our successes with other organizations—without cost—and contribute to the broader fight against CSAM online.

ii. **Exploitation of Minors:** Text-based sexual exploitation and extortion of minors is a persistent and growing problem. Last fall, Discord launched Safety Alerts on Senders, a tool designed in collaboration with the child safety non-profit Thorn that alerts teen users on Discord when a conversation is potentially unwanted. This new feature is on by default for teen users and helps determine when a DM sent to a teen from an unfamiliar user should trigger the delivery of a safety alert to the teen recipient. The alert encourages teens to think carefully before replying to messages from strangers, allows teen users to block new and unfamiliar senders, and provides a link to safety tips for how teens can best protect themselves online.

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iii. **Sensitive Content Filters:** This feature automatically blurs potentially sensitive media sent to teens in DMs, GDMs, and in servers. Blurring is enabled by default for teen users in DMs and GDMs with friends and in servers. In DMs and GDMs with non-friends, potentially sensitive media is blocked by default for teen users.

b. **What benefits can AI provide to helping detect and/or stop harmful content to children online?**

AI and machine learning can provide significant benefits in helping to detect and combat harmful content online, including content that poses minor safety risks. Discord is committed to leveraging all available tools and technologies as it works to prevent, detect, and respond forcefully to content that harms minors.

AI and machine learning can increase the efficacy of existing tools and technologies and are vital components of the work Discord is doing to halt the spread of CSAM. For example, Discord has invested in developing innovative technologies to proactively identify novel CSAM—images that have not previously been detected and so do not appear in available hash databases. Discord collaborated with industry peers to further develop CLIP, a machine learning image detection and identification algorithm, into a specialized version designed to detect unknown and AI-generated CSAM. In recognition of the industry-wide need to develop and deploy tools to effectively identify novel CSAM, as of October we have made Discord's CSAM-trained CLIP implementation open source, so that we can share our successes with other organizations—without cost—and contribute to the broader fight against CSAM online. By leveraging these tools, Discord's model had an 87 percent increase in recall, i.e. proactively-detected confirmed positive CSAM.

AI- and machine learning-powered technologies can also be leveraged to detect and prevent attempts to exploit minors via text messaging. In October 2023, Discord announced [Teen Safety Assist](), a series of new features designed to keep teens safe on our platform. Among the tools announced as a part of this new initiative are [Sensitive Content Filters](), which automatically blur potentially sensitive media sent to teens in DMs, GDMs, and in servers. Blurring is enabled by default for teen users in DMs and GDMs with friends and in servers. In DMs and GDMs with non-friends, potentially sensitive media is blocked by default for teen users. Adult users can choose to opt-in to this feature by changing their Privacy & Safety Settings.

Last fall, Discord also launched [Safety Alerts on Senders](), a tool designed in collaboration with the child safety non-profit Thorn, that alerts teen users on Discord when a conversation is potentially unwanted. This new feature is on by default for teen users and helps determine when a DM sent to a teen from an unfamiliar user should trigger the delivery of a safety alert to the teen recipient. The alert encourages teens to think carefully before replying to messages from

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Additionally, AI and machine learning play important roles in addressing and attacking these issues at scale. Discord is able to filter, detect, block, and take action on more content today than would ever be possible without these technologies.

c. **What does a human reviewer provide that an AI or automated tool cannot? Will we always need some measure of human review in assessing online harms to children?**

Human review of potentially violative content is particularly valuable in conducting quality assurance checks. As tools powered by AI and machine learning are deployed on new areas of harm, humans conduct spot checks and audits that guide the development and deployment of the tools. As such, at this time, humans are critical to refining the models, enhancing consistency, and directing consequential decisions around banning accounts and servers.

Humans with subject matter expertise play a critically important role in investigating and actioning particularly nuanced cases involving potential harms to children, such as grooming. Discord devotes significant time to investigating and appropriately reporting such instances to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), and human review is a uniquely valuable part of that work.

d. **The FTC has sent mixed signals in its enforcement of COPPA. While the Commission emphasizes not over relying on use of automated tools or AI, they have nonetheless found liability for using human review as alternative**

signaling overreliance on automated tools. What improvements, if any, should Congress make to clarify the legal tension between use of automated detection tools vs. human review?

As it pertains to potential COPPA enforcement, Congress should ensure that neither automated nor human review can give rise to the "actual knowledge" that underpins a COPPA violation when done in good faith. Discord has policies and procedures in place to investigate and verify a user's age in situations where either the user, within the platform, admits that they are underage or Discord receives a credible report, supported by clear and convincing evidence, that the user is underage.

Outside the context of COPPA, Congress should expressly clarify that companies cannot face liability for: (i) removing content through AI-powered tools and (ii) leveraging human review of CSAM, including for quality assurance and auditing. Enacting carve outs specific to this work will help Discord as well as other companies and vendors build robust detection systems, collaborate, and provide supervision and quality control of those systems.

5. **In 2021, Congress directed the FTC to research and report on how AI can be used positively to detect and combat fraudulent or deceptive content online. Rather than viewing AI as a potential solution to our online woes, the FTC instead issued a report that read more like an indictment of the technology.**

    a. **Please explain whether, in your view, AI can be used to positively detect and combat fraudulent or deceptive content, including the recent use of deepfakes or other scams to harm consumers.**

       Yes, AI can be used as a tool to positively detect and combat such content. Addressing these issues requires a robust system that leverages a combination of machine learning, behavioral heuristics, hashing and matching systems, and other tools—all of which need to work in concert. These models must constantly evolve to address the new challenges presented by the iteration of the technologies used by bad actors and to ensure that the use of AI does not lead to the over-moderation of legitimate content. As such, building tools that effectively combat such content requires collaboration and a significant commitment of resources.

    b. **Has the FTC ever consulted with your company to learn how your company deploys AI to better detect and combat fraudulent or deceptive content? Has**

the DOJ? How about the Federal Elections Commission?

No.

    c. **How can Congress empower agencies to use AI positively for the protection of American consumers from fraudulent or deceptive content?**

Discord's use of machine learning and AI to detect and remove content that violates our Community Guidelines suggests that federal agencies could leverage similar technologies to analyze reported fraudulent or deceptive content, provided sufficient safeguards are in place to help ensure accuracy and privacy. To the extent that such uses of AI may require congressional authorization or oversight, this may be an area for congressional action.

6. **Please provide a description of your company's policy regarding the sale or transfer of the data of American users collected on your platform to a third party, including data brokers.**

Discord does not sell user information, nor does it transfer user information to data brokers. Discord uses various service providers, such as cloud storage providers and payment processors, who store and process user information at Discord's direction. Discord may also transfer user information when instructed to do so by the user, such as when a user connects their Discord account to a third-party service.

7. **Has your company ever sold the data of American users on your platform to the government of a foreign country? If so, please provide a full list of the countries and the categories of data sold.**

No.

8. **Outside of complying with a lawful order, has your company ever transferred the data of American users on your platform to the government of a foreign country? If so, please provide a full list of the countries and the circumstances underlying the basis for such transfer.**

No.

9. **Has your company ever sold the data of American users on your platform to a U.S. government agency? If so, please provide a full list of the agencies and the categories of data sold.**

No.

10. **Outside of complying with a lawful order, has your company ever transferred the data of American users on your platform to a U.S. government agency? If so, please provide a full list of the agencies and categories of data transferred.**

Yes. Discord has disclosed limited basic subscriber information such as IP addresses and session logs in response to emergency disclosure requests in emergency situations involving threats to life or serious bodily injury. In the U.S., Discord receives, responds, and communicates with federal and local law enforcement on these matters.

11. **Does your company have a policy to restrict third party use and/or transfer of data collected from users on your platform? Please be specific, including how you enforce such restrictions and whether such restrictions prohibit the sale or transfer of such data to a government agency, including a foreign government agency.**

Yes. Discord uses contractual language in our data processing addendums, plus employee training, internal access controls, and data governance to restrict the transfer of data.

12. **Between July 4, 2023 and July 14, 2023, was your company contacted by any employee of or contractor for any of the following agencies? Please answer "yes" or "no" for each agency and, if "yes," provide the date(s) of contact and the name(s) of the agency employees or contractors that contacted your company.**

The answers below reflect requests from the specified federal agencies that were received via Discord's Government Request Portal during the period specified.

    a. **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)**

        No.

    b. **National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)**

        No.

    c. **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

        No.

d. **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**

No.

e. **The National Institutes of Health (NIH)**

No.

f. **U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)**

Yes. In 2023, Discord was contacted by the DHS on July 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 14.

g. **DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)**

No.

h. **U.S. Census Bureau**

No.

i. **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)**

Yes. In 2023, Discord was contacted by the FBI on July 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14.

j. **U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)**

Yes. In 2023, Discord was contacted by the DOJ on July 3, 5, 7, 10, and 13.

k. **The White House Executive Office of the President (EOP)**

No.

l. **U.S. Department of State**

No.

13. **Is it your company's policy to prevent children under 13 from using your social media app(s) or creating an account?**

Yes.

14. **In your view, would it be appropriate for school-aged children to spend time on or access your company's social media app(s) during class?**

Yes, in some circumstances and for use among study groups and friends. Discord is a real-time communications platform and not a traditional social media application. Many children between the ages of 13-18 used Discord regularly during remote learning, particularly in 2020, to informally collaborate on group projects and work with their classmates on homework assignments.

15. **As a parent, would you be concerned if your child were able to access your company's social media app(s) during class via a school network or device?**

My children are both under the age of 5 and are not currently allowed to use social media apps under any conditions.

16. **In your view, should elementary and secondary schools block students' access to your company's social media app(s) on school networks and devices?**

No. Discord is a real-time communications platform and not a traditional social media application. Like other communications tools, Discord can be used effectively for informal collaboration. Discord has been a sponsor of National PTA and collaborates with the organization on digital safety resources and events designed to elevate youth voices and foster shared understanding among teens, caregivers, and educators. Schools are best positioned to determine the access restrictions for their students, and not the providers.

Because users must be at least 13 years old to create an account on Discord, elementary school students are prohibited from using Discord.

17. **Do you think that school buses equipped with Wi-Fi should allow children to access your company's social media app(s) via a school bus Wi-Fi network during their rides to and from school?**

Discord is a real-time communications platform and not a traditional social media application. Users must be at least 13 years old to create an account on Discord. Like other communications tools, Discord can be used effectively in a variety of settings.

18. **As a parent, do you think it is important to supervise your children's internet access?**

    Yes.

19. **As a parent, would you be concerned if your child's school allowed your child to access the internet on an unsupervised basis, such as on your child's bus ride to and from school via the school bus Wi-Fi?**

    My children are both under the age of 5 and are not currently allowed unsupervised access to the internet.

20. **Do you think Congress should require schools, as a condition of receiving broadband subsidies through the Federal Communications Commission's E-Rate program (which funds broadband for elementary and secondary schools), to block students' access to your company's social media app(s) from school-run networks?**

    No. Discord is a real-time communications platform and not a traditional social media application. Like other communications tools, Discord can be used effectively for informal collaboration in some circumstances.

    Because users must be at least 13 years old to create an account on Discord, elementary school students are implicitly prohibited from using Discord.

21. **Do you support the bipartisan *Eyes on the Board Act of 2023*, S. 3074?**

    We agree with the goal of ensuring that children are safe online. However, Discord is concerned that the bill could limit important access to information, collaboration, and learning. We look forward to working with the Committee as they continue to explore these issues.

22. **Have you, your company, or any foundation associated with you or your company, donated or contributed funding, equipment, or services to any of the following organizations in the last ten years (CY 2013 to CY 2023)?**

    a. **Education and Libraries Networks Coalition (EdLiNC)**

       Jason Citron: No.
       Discord Inc.: No.

b. Open Technology Institute

Jason Citron: No.
Discord Inc.: No.

c. Consortium for School Networking (COSN)

Jason Citron: No.
Discord Inc.: No.

d. Funds For Learning

Jason Citron: No.
Discord Inc.: No.

e. State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA)

Jason Citron: No.
Discord Inc.: No.

f. Schools, Health, and Libraries Broadband Coalition (SHLB)

Jason Citron: No.
Discord Inc.: No.

g. State E-Rate Coordinators' Alliance (SECA)

Jason Citron: No.
Discord Inc.: No.

h. EducationSuperHighway

Jason Citron: No.
Discord Inc.: No.

i. All4Ed

Jason Citron: No.
Discord Inc.: No.

j. **Public Knowledge**

   Jason Citron: No.
   Discord Inc.: No.

k. **Fight for the Future**

   Jason Citron: No.
   Discord Inc.: No.

l. **Free Press**

   Jason Citron: No.
   Discord Inc.: No.

m. **Electronic Frontier Foundation**

   Jason Citron: No.
   Discord Inc.: Yes.

n. **Benton Foundation or Benton Institute for Broadband & Society**

   Jason Citron: No.
   Discord Inc.: No.

o. **Electronic Privacy Information Center**

   Jason Citron: No.
   Discord Inc.: No.

23. **For each such donation or contribution described in the prior question, please detail (1) the type of donation or contribution, such as financial donation, goods or equipment, services, etc.; (2) who made the donation or contribution; (3) the recipient organization; (4) the year the donation or contribution was made; and (5) the total value of that donation or contribution.**

    Discord Inc. donated a total of $252.48 to the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF)—these donations were made through our Employee Giving Program, wherein either Discord matches employees' donations to non-profit organizations up to $1,000 per employee per year in time and/or funds, or Discord seeds employees a Deed credit which

they can donate to the non-profit of their choice. Since 2021, Discord has used Deed, a workplace giving and volunteering platform, to administer the Employee Giving Program.

Occasionally, in order to incentivize employees to use the Program, Discord occasionally "seeds" employees a Deed credit that they can then donate to the non-profit of their choice. Discord does not match "seeded" funds.

Through Deed, 4 employees made 19 donations to EFF over three years: $73.60 in 2022, $158.88 in 2023, and $20 in 2024. Because Discord matches employee donations made via Deed up to $1,000 per employee per year, Discord Inc. matched 15 donations to EFF: $25 in 2022, $120 in 2023, and $20 in 2024. Four donations ($87.48 total) represent Deed credit "seeded" by Discord: $48.60 (two donations of $24.30) in 2022, and $38.88 (two donations of $19.44) in 2023. In total, Discord donated $252.48 to EFF.

Senator Josh Hawley
Senate Judiciary Committee
Questions for the Record
Jason Citron, Co-Founder and CEO, Discord Inc.

1. **Do you allow your children to use social media? If so, please explain under what conditions.**

    My children are both under the age of 5 and are not currently allowed to use social media under any conditions.

2. **Do you believe that children under the age of 18 should be allowed to use social media?**

    Discord is a real-time communications platform and not a traditional social media application. Users must be at least 13 years old to create an account on Discord.

3. **How many individuals does your company employ in Trust & Safety?**

    More than 15 percent of our full-time employees (FTEs) work on safety company-wide at Discord. By way of context, that means our Safety team is larger than our Marketing team. Discord employs 74 FTEs in Trust & Safety and more than 400 external partners and contract agents in Trust & Safety.

4. **How many individuals does your company employ to review content for so-called "misinformation," "disinformation," or "malinformation"?**

    As a real-time communications platform, Discord is not set up for public posts or the viral sharing of information. Therefore, we have prioritized minor safety over the content mentioned. As such, we do not have dedicated employees with their sole focus on misinformation, disinformation, or malinformation.

5. **How many dollars per year does your company spend on salaries for Trust & Safety officers?**

    In 2023, the combined salaries of all full-time employees on the Trust & Safety team at Discord was approximately $11.1 million.

6. **Do you believe that the algorithms your company has developed to sort users' feeds are protected by Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act of 1995? If so, please explain why.**

    Discord is a real-time communications platform that does not algorithmically sort and serve curated feeds.

7. **Do you believe that the algorithms your company has developed to sort users' feeds are expressive speech protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution? If so, please explain why.**

    Discord is a real-time communications platform that does not algorithmically sort and serve content to user feeds.

8. **Is your company a member of a party, an amicus, or a member of an amicus in *NetChoice, LLC v. Paxton*, No. 22-555 (U.S.), or did your company provide any funds or donations to any party or amicus in that case? If so, please describe the amount of funds or donations made and the context.**

    Discord is an amicus in *NetChoice, LLC v. Paxton*, No. 22-55 (U.S.). Discord's amicus brief can be found here.

9. **Do you believe that the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution precludes Congress from enacting legislation holding social media companies liable to users for torts they commit?**

    I am not an attorney and I do not believe I have the authority or expertise to answer the question you present here.

10. **Do you believe that companies can be trusted to develop artificial general intelligence (AI) through open-source methods?**

    Discord takes a "safety by design" approach to our work—a process that includes a risk assessment during the product design phase to identify and mitigate potential safety risks. This approach means that our teams pursue responsible product design by studying human behavior and considering the impacts of our product on user safety—before we launch a product into the market.

    Discord has developed AI tools through open-source methods and has made open source new machine learning tools that we helped develop in the child safety space, so that we can contribute to the broader fight against child sexual abuse material (CSAM) online by sharing our successes with industry peers and outside organizations. For example, Discord collaborated with industry peers to further develop CLIP, a machine learning image detection and identification algorithm, into a specialized version designed to detect unknown and AI-generated CSAM. In recognition of the industry-wide need to develop and deploy tools to effectively identify novel CSAM, as of October we have made Discord's CSAM-trained CLIP implementation open source.

11. **Do you believe the government should play a role in licensing certain artificial intelligence technologies, such as generative AI products?**

    I do not believe I have the authority or perspective to determine the proper role of the

government in licensing artificial intelligence technologies.

12. **Do you believe that artificial intelligence represents an existential threat to humanity?**

I do not believe I have the authority or perspective to determine whether artificial intelligence represents an existential threat to humanity.

13. **Do you think that the development of large language models by Microsoft, Google, Meta, and other large companies raises antitrust concerns?**

I do not believe I have the expertise to determine whether development of large language models by large companies raises antitrust concerns.

14. **What steps does your company take to make transparent the algorithms by which users are censored, shadow banned, or demonetized?**

Discord does not practice censorship or shadow banning. We may demonetize Discord creators who violate our policies, but do so based on human review.

Our quarterly Transparency Reports contain discussions of the kinds of moderation tools we use. In those reports, Discord explains that it relies on various image hashing and machine learning powered tools to detect possible Community Guidelines violations, overwhelmingly in the minor safety context. Discord has also discussed these features in blog posts and other articles on its website, Discord.com. There is no human review for a content moderation decision if a user shares a piece of known CSAM that is identified by PhotoDNA. For other possible violations, the content is reviewed by Discord external partner agents or full-time employees.

There are limited circumstances in which Discord might limit certain functionality for a particular user. Historically, that practice has been limited to accounts that engaged in spam and other [inauthentic behavior](). For example, if a new account is created on Discord and within minutes it joins dozens of servers and sends hundreds of messages a minute, we may limit the ability for that account to send messages or join new servers. Because this behavior is often the result of individuals or groups who intend to harass and spam users on the service, Discord intentionally limits the extent to which it reveals its methods for detecting such activity.

Discord offers its users only a handful of ways that they may monetize on the service, and those avenues are largely experimental and limited to a small number of total users. Discord does not rely on algorithms to determine whether to limit or remove a user from accessing its monetization features.

15. **What steps does your company take to ensure that your company is not disproportionately targeting or censoring conservative voices?**

Discord is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all our users—regardless of their political views—and takes content moderation and safety seriously. To that end, we take pride in the processes, systems, and policies that we have independently developed to guide our approach to content moderation. Discord makes its own decisions on content moderation and safety. To set the baseline for interactions on the platform, Discord publishes Terms of Service and Community Guidelines, outlining what is and is not allowed on Discord. Discord publishes explainers for a wide range of its policies on the Discord Policy Hub, to better make users aware of what the Terms, Guidelines, and policies entail.

We have crafted and honed these public-facing policies with the goal of meeting the needs of our business and users, including their safety and free speech as well as our own free speech rights and business goals. Discord's Community Guidelines are designed to prohibit user behavior that breaks the law or causes serious harm. None of the restrictions in Discord's public-facing policies implicate or regulate political speech unless it otherwise violates the policies. When we do take action to enforce our Terms of Service and Community Guidelines, we strive to be transparent about the nature and quantity of our content moderation efforts. To that end, we publish regular Transparency Reports which quantify the types of actions we have taken and for what category of content.

To identify and action content that violates Discord policies, Discord employs a Trust & Safety team. Discord identifies content and servers that violate its policies in three fundamental ways: (1) through user-generated reports, (2) through proactive moderation by a dedicated team of Discord employees, (3) through Community Moderation, and (4) via a trusted reporter process that allows trusted partners to surface content and reports of violations directly to our Safety team. Proactive monitoring is done by specialist teams trained in evaluating and acting upon certain types of high-harm conduct, including Violent Extremism, Exploitative and Child Sexual Abuse Materials, and Cybercrime. Community moderation allows individual community administrators and moderators to establish rules on top of those Guidelines, to better set the tone for their individual communities, and may remove additional content at their own discretion and based on their own free speech rights. For example, the owner of a server devoted to Green Bay Packers can limit posts by users asserting the superiority of the Dallas Cowboys, and vice-versa. This type of moderation is in addition to, and not instead of, other moderation conducted on the platform. Should a user be removed by a private server moderator for violating server rules (like posting pictures of cats in a server dedicated to pictures of dogs) they can join other cat-related servers or start their own.

Additionally, it is important to emphasize that Discord is a real-time communications platform for friend groups and small communities. It is not a traditional social media platform with posts to the general public that have the potential to go viral or be suppressed based on algorithmic functions or human intervention. Our product is not designed to amplify, promote, or publish public messages to a mass audience in order to increase user engagement and achieve ad sales goals.

16. Do you condemn Hamas' terrorist attacks on the State of Israel on October 7, 2023?

Yes, Discord and I both condemn terrorist attacks on civilians around the globe, including the October 7, 2023 attack by Hamas.

17. What role do you believe social media companies have in promoting or limiting public speech regarding the events of October 7, 2023?

Discord is a real-time communications platform and not a traditional social media site.

18. What investments has your company made in anti-CSAM technology?

Discord uses PhotoDNA to proactively scan images uploaded to our service in order to detect and report CSAM content and perpetrators to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), which subsequently works with local law enforcement to take appropriate action. In addition to hash matching, Discord uses internally developed tools (including machine learning techniques) and works with industry partners (including peer companies, non-profits, and researchers) to detect CSAM distribution.

In addition to our use of industry standard tools to detect and remove known CSAM, Discord invests in developing innovative technologies to proactively identify novel CSAM—images that have not previously been detected and so do not appear in available hash databases. Discord collaborated with industry peers to further develop CLIP, a machine learning image detection and identification algorithm, into a specialized version designed to detect unknown and AI-generated CSAM. In recognition of the industry-wide need to develop and deploy tools to effectively identify novel CSAM, as of October we have made Discord's CSAM-trained CLIP implementation open source, so that we can share our successes with other organizations—without cost—and contribute to the broader fight against CSAM online. By leveraging these tools, Discord's model had an 87 percent increase in recall, i.e. proactively-detected confirmed positive CSAM.

We also invest in new ways to detect the exploitation of minors (commonly referred to as grooming). In October 2023, Discord announced [Teen Safety Assist](), a series of new features designed to keep teens safe on our platform. One of the tools announced as a part of this new initiative is [Sensitive Content Filters](), which automatically blur potentially sensitive media sent to teens in direct messages (DMs), group direct messages (GDMs), and in servers. Blurring is enabled by default for teen users both in DMs and GDMs with friends and in servers. In DMs and GDMs with non-friends, potentially sensitive media is blocked by default for teen users. Adult users can also choose to opt-in to this feature by changing their Privacy & Safety Settings.

Last fall, Discord also launched [Safety Alerts on Senders](), a tool designed in collaboration with the child safety non-profit Thorn that alerts teen users on Discord when a conversation is potentially unwanted. This new feature is on by default for teen users and helps determine when a DM sent to a teen from an unfamiliar user should trigger the delivery of a safety alert to the teen recipient. The alert encourages teens to think

carefully before replying to messages from strangers, allows teen users to block new and unfamiliar senders, and provides a link to safety tips for how teens can best protect themselves online.

On February 6, 2024, Discord announced Safety Alerts in Chat, a new feature also developed in collaboration with Thorn that leverages machine learning algorithms to analyze messages between adults and teenagers. This product aims to identify messages that may be indicative of grooming behaviors. Upon detection, it will notify a teen user about these potentially harmful messages and offer a suite of safety tools, including options to block and report the sender, along with providing advice on dealing with an unwanted situation and encouraging the teen user to take a break from the conversation, reach out to Crisis Text Line for live help, or visit NoFiltr.org for more resources and safety tips. This new feature will start rolling out in the coming weeks.

As part of our extensive fight against CSAM, we continued to deepen our partnership with the Tech Coalition. One of the most exciting parts of our partnership with the Tech Coalition this year was the launch of Lantern, a first-of-its-kind signal sharing program for companies to enhance and strengthen how we detect attempts to sexually exploit and abuse children and teens online. Discord joined other industry partners like Google, Meta, Roblox, Snap, and others to share signals about activity we detect that violates our policies and utilize signals shared by other companies to surface violating activity on their platforms.

Our largest acquisition to date has been on a machine learning safety company called Sentropy. Discord is committed to making heavy investments in safety and it's reflective in how we prioritize safety.

19. **Have you read the Fifth Circuit's opinion in *Missouri v. Biden*, No. 23-30445?**

   No.

20. **Do you dispute any factual findings in the Fifth Circuit's opinions or the district court's opinions?**

   I have not read *Missouri v. Biden* and am not in a position to dispute its factual findings. However, I've been informed that Discord is incorrectly characterized as a "social media company" in the district court's opinion and that there are no references to Discord in the Fifth Circuit opinion.

21. **Does your platform continue to receive requests from federal agencies to censor or promote certain content?**

   From time to time, Discord receives notices from federal agencies regarding illegal content that violates our community guidelines and we action accordingly.

22. What steps do your platforms take to verify and enforce age restrictions?

When an individual attempts to register a new account, Discord requires the individual to enter their date of birth through a neutral age gate. If the individual provides a date of birth indicating that they are under 13 years old, Discord does not permit the individual to register an account and instead presents a notice screen informing the individual that they are "unable to register." If the individual selects "Back to Login," they are shown the typical registration landing screen and if they select "Register," they are once again shown the "unable to register" notice without being provided an opportunity to make up a new birthdate or attempt to re-register. Discord provides additional information to the public about why the service asks for individuals' date of birth in a published Trust & Safety article.

Discord also takes steps to confirm that registered users are 18 years of age or older when they attempt to join an "age-restricted" server or channel. As outlined in the Community Guidelines, users must be age 18 or older to participate in communities containing adult content on Discord and servers and channels organized around adult content or age-restricted themes (e.g., violent content) must be labeled as age-restricted. When a user first attempts to join an age-restricted server or channel, Discord implements an extra layer of protection, through an age-restricted warning or gate.

Discord also investigates and verifies a user's age in situations where either (i) the user, within the platform, admits that they are underage or (ii) Discord receives a credible report, supported by clear and convincing evidence, that the user is underage. For instance, Discord sometimes receives communications allegedly from a parent or guardian asserting that their underage child has a Discord account. Discord's Trust & Safety team takes these reports seriously and follows processes for investigating such reports and, where appropriate, verifying the user's age and disabling the user's account if we determine that the user is under 13.

Finally, Discord undertakes efforts to identify a user's age when a user whose account has been banned for being underage submits an appeal. Discord employs a rigorous verification process for investigating and arbitrating such appeals with an emphasis on giving the user (or their parent) an opportunity to definitively prove that the user is age 13 or older, while leaving properly executed bans in place.

23. In cases where a child's safety is at risk, how does your company collaborate with law enforcement? What information or assistance is provided?

Discord provides user information to law enforcement when we receive valid legal process or when there are emergency situations when we possess a good faith belief that there is an imminent risk of serious physical injury or death. We also may proactively report to law enforcement when we inadvertently come across information that appears to pertain to the commission of a crime, and are especially likely to proactively disclose this information in situations which appear to be high harm. When we come across

information that relates to child abuse material, we report that to NCMEC.

24. Do you believe there is any expressive value in CGI or AI generated CSAM?

Discord does not allow on our platform any content or activity that sexualizes a minor, including AI-generated CSAM. We do not find value in such images, and we prohibit such images entirely. When such imagery is found, it is removed and reported to NCMEC, which subsequently works with local law enforcement to take appropriate action. This policy is designed to ensure that the content does not proliferate and that the sexualization of children in any context is not normalized by bad actors.

25. Do you believe that CGI or AI generated CSAM is protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution?

I am not an attorney and I do not believe I have the expertise to answer this question. As such, I have no position on the constitutional status of CGI or AI generated depictions of CSAM. I understand that Discord has the right to prohibit such content on our platform. We do not allow on Discord any content or activity that sexualizes a minor, including AI-generated CSAM. When such imagery is found, it is removed and reported to NCMEC, which subsequently works with local law enforcement to take appropriate action. This policy is designed to ensure that the content does not proliferate and that the sexualization of children in any context is not normalized by bad actors.

26. What measures does your platform take to ensure that children only see age-appropriate advertisements?

Discord historically has not sold advertising and instead builds premium features that users can choose to purchase. For example, users can buy subscriptions to products like Nitro, which gives users the ability to upload larger files, stream video in high definition, and personalize the user experience by using custom emoji and digital stickers in conversations with others. Discord users can also purchase Server Boosts, which allow users to share these perks with members of a server to which they belong. These features are designed to improve the experience of using Discord, not to maximize engagement by keeping users on the app.

27. Will you commit to setting up a compensation fund for those who have been harmed by your platform?

We take our responsibility to our users seriously. Discord's commitment to safety is reflected in our investments in improving online safety and the way we build our products. It starts with the technology we build and the expertise we rely on to manage it. We also work closely with law enforcement when appropriate and support legislative efforts to ensure they can hold perpetrators of crimes accountable. For example, we support elements of the SHIELD Act that create new criminal offenses related to the non-consensual distribution of intimate visual depictions.

28. Does Discord have access to and provide copies of users' direct message communications to federal law enforcement upon request?

Discord is required to produce content data upon receipt of legal process reviewed by a judge or magistrate. Discord is generally required to produce content data upon receipt of a judicially-reviewed legal process, such a search warrant, subject to Discord's legal objections.

29. Has Discord ever received a request from an executive agency to monitor or promote certain kinds of content?

We are not aware of any communications to Discord from any executive agency seeking the monitoring or promotion of certain kinds of content. We have, on occasion, been invited by executive agencies to participate in summits, roundtables, and listening sessions on policy topics.

30. Some generative AI models, most notably Midjourney, use Discord as their user interface. Does Discord monitor the images created in this way?

Images generated through AI models are monitored via the same visual detection system as all other messages and images on the platform. As a result, we scan the attachments stored on Discord for CSAM via hash matching. For instances where the user submits images to modify with AI, the input images are scanned for CSAM as well.

Additionally, images generated through AI models are monitored via the new visual detection tools used to detect unknown and AI-generated CSAM, which Discord built in collaboration with industry peers.

31. Has Discord created policies to monitor the use of these models within the platform?

Discord's platform policies and community guidelines apply to all content on Discord, including prompts made to generative AI models and the content produced by these models.

32. Does Discord have Trust & safety employees dedicated to monitoring the content created by generative AI that is hosted on Discord?

Discord's Minor Safety and Exploitative Content (MSEC) team works to detect and action this type of content. Additionally, our machine learning teams are focused on developing new ways to tackle novel and AI-generated CSAM.

1. **Twenty-one is the minimum age to purchase highly regulated adult products such as alcohol, tobacco, and nicotine. Nevertheless, there is a proliferation of user-generated content posted on social media sites featuring underage use of these products.**

   Recently, some have proposed banning these age-restricted products due in part to the user-generated content being available on your respective platforms. Surely, banning these products cannot be the answer. However, we must do more – your company must do more – to shield underage audiences from exposure to this content.

   Therefore, as the content moderator of these platforms, what policies do you have in place, and what more can you do, to prevent this type of user-generated content from reaching underage audiences? How do you respond to requests to pull this content from your sites when deemed inappropriate for underage audiences?

   Discord's Community Guidelines provide that users are not permitted to organize, promote, or engage in any illegal behavior, such as the buying, selling, or trading of dangerous and regulated goods. Dangerous and regulated goods include but are not limited to: firearms; explosives; tactical gear; imitation firearms; illicit drugs; marijuana; alcohol; and tobacco.

   However, while users are prohibited from illegal behavior related to dangerous or regulated goods (i.e., minor users attempting to buy alcohol on Discord), Discord does allow general discussions and content about such goods (i.e., a server in which adult users discuss their favorite breweries) provided that the content is posted behind an age-gated channel or server as outlined in our Age-Restricted Content Policy. Discord's Community Guidelines also provide that users must be age 18 or older to participate in communities containing adult content on Discord and servers and channels organized around adult content or age-restricted themes must be labeled as age-restricted. When a user first attempts to join an age-restricted server or channel, Discord implements an extra layer of protection, through an age-restricted warning or gate.

2. **Public reports conclude that drug cartels use social media like TikTok, META, X, Snapchat, and others to plan, organize, and communicate in real-time. These communications coincide directly with criminal activity.**

What are your companies doing to crack down on cartel coordination? Specifically, in the recruitment of children to commit crimes or assist in the sale/distribution of illicit drugs?

Discord takes immediate action against any identified criminal activity, employing advanced detection methods, including network analysis of bad actors and keyword matching, to proactively identify and address spaces suspected of engaging in the illegal sale of substances. We continuously monitor our platform for illicit activities and take immediate action when we find it.

3. **What steps does your platform take to proactively remove, delist, and ban any posts, users, websites, and advertisements associated with the sale and distribution of fentanyl and other illicit drugs?**

   Discord enforces its [Dangerous and Regulated Goods Policy](#) prohibiting the sale and distribution of dangerous or regulated goods, including illicit drugs. We employ a dedicated Cybercrime team equipped with sophisticated tools and methodologies to proactively detect and dismantle networks involved in such illegal activities. This includes the use of keyword scanning to identify and take action against entities selling or distributing drugs and other illicit substances. Approximately 80 percent of our interventions are initiated proactively, with the remaining 20 percent resulting from user reports. Furthermore, we actively engage in partnerships with industry peers and governmental bodies, including the DEA, to continuously refine our detection capabilities and response strategies, ensuring we are at the forefront of combating the digital facilitation of drug trafficking.

4. **One area of growing concern is the sale and distribution of fake or counterfeit vaping devices online, particularly in connection with so-called Delta-8 THC. Counterfeit vapes, many coming from China, have unsafe and even potentially deadly chemicals. They have caused hospitalizations and death. What are your platforms doing to combat this problem?**

   Discord strictly prohibits the sale of fake or counterfeit vaping devices, recognizing the severe health risks they pose, including those associated with Delta-8 THC products. We actively enforce Discord's Dangerous and Regulated Goods Policy through proactive detection methods, including advanced algorithms and keyword scanning, to identify and remove violative servers and users. In addition to our technology-driven approaches, we also encourage user reports of suspected counterfeit items. Upon identification, we take down these spaces and take appropriate actions against the users involved**.**

5. **What are the main impediments your platform encounters in identifying all fentanyl and illicit drug advertisements posted to your platform(s) automatically? Please describe any circumstances in which you do not or cannot apply detection technologies against content transmitted on your platform(s).**

   Discord employs various proactive methods to detect illicit drug advertisements, including those related to fentanyl. The development and implementation of advanced machine learning (ML) models to enhance detection accuracy require considerable staffing to manage and refine these models, which poses challenges to mid-sized companies. Additionally, the high rate of false positives often associated with such detection models can present a significant challenge to automated enforcement.

6. **How many posts, users, websites, and advertisements have you removed, delisted, and banned per year for the sale and distribution of fentanyl and other illicit drugs? How many per year? Have you seen an increase in illicit drugs being advertised to children on your platform(s)?**

   In our ongoing efforts to combat the sale and distribution of illicit drugs, including fentanyl, on our platform, we have taken the following enforcement actions regarding illegal goods over the past three years:

   - In 2021, we removed 52,995 users and 777 servers.
   - In 2022, we removed 20,244 users and 456 servers.
   - In 2023, we took action against 4,578 users and 463 servers.

   Discord cannot disaggregate this data further to just illicit drugs, but these actions encompass illicit drugs, weapons, and other illegal goods. Discord's active enforcement of our Dangerous and Regulated Goods Policy, particularly our proactive detection methods that leverage advanced algorithms and keyword scanning, has enabled the platform to better identify and remove violative servers. As these enforcement statistics suggest, we have observed a downward trend in the number of drug-related servers on our platform.

7. **Are there any other roadblocks or impediments that you face in addressing fentanyl and illicit drug advertisements on your platform(s), and working with law enforcement on such matters? If yes, what are they? If no, how many cases have been transmitted to law enforcement and DEA?**

   Enhanced cooperation with law enforcement agencies, including the DEA, and increased

industry collaboration have aided in improving our capabilities through shared intelligence. Discord is developing its protocols for more effective information sharing which will result in greater capability to transmit drug-related information to law enforcement agencies.

8. **How do you work with organizations, advocates, and experts focused on drug prevention and addiction recovery to adapt your products and operations to keep up with the illicit drug crisis — including working with parents that have lost children due to lethal drugs bought online?**

   In addition to our work with the National PTA (discussed in greater detail below) to create digital safety resources and events for teens, caregivers, and educators, Discord is also a member of the Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI) and supports ConnectSafely, a non-profit organization that educates people about online safety, privacy, security, and digital wellness.

9. **What are the total number of meetings that your company has had with parents to address online safety concerns? Can you provide the total number of meetings over the last three years? Please separate this last question's answer by number per year.**

   Discord's work with parents and guardians, as well as parent-led organizations, is vital to our child safety efforts. For example, Discord has met regularly with National PTA nearly every-other week since late 2021. Since 2022, Discord has been a sponsor of National PTA. Discord collaborates with National PTA on digital safety resources and events designed to elevate youth voices and foster shared understanding among teens, caregivers and educators. The PTA Connected: Build Up and Belong program, sponsored by Discord, facilitates technology discussions between teens and their parents and caregivers about online safety topics. In 2023, 25 local PTAs were selected to receive $1,250 each, sponsored by Discord, to host a PTA Connected: Build Up and Belong program. Discord also sponsored grants for this program in 2022.

10. **In 2022, then National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) received over 32 million reports of Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM). Reports of online sex crimes to the CyberTipline are growing exponentially year by year. Out of those 32 million reports, how many did your platform submit to NCMEC?**

    In 2022, Discord submitted 58,179 reports to NCMEC. In 2023, we submitted 165,478 reports to NCMEC. These metrics can be found in our Transparency Reports.

11. **There is concern that this number is going to fall dramatically this year because of**

the adoption of end-to-end encryption, not because the problem is going away. How will your company track and address this issue moving forward?

Text messages on Discord are not end-to-end encrypted and we commit to keeping teen users' text messages unencrypted. The features Discord deploys to help keep teens safe on our service, such as our Teen Safety Assist feature, are designed to identify conversations with teen users that could present a risk to their safety, and the effectiveness of our teen safety features would be undermined by encrypting the text messages of teen users.

Additionally, Discord is committed to working with NCMEC to detect and remove CSAM on our platform and the broader internet through initiatives like the Technology Coalition's Project Lantern.

12. **Has your platform seen an increase of suspected online child sexual exploitation-CSAM over the past few years? If so, what do you believe is the driving factor on why it's happening on your platform?**

Discord continues to invest in developing innovative technologies to proactively identify CSAM, including AI-generated, photorealistic CSAM and novel CSAM—images that have not previously been detected and so do not appear in available hash databases. While we are unable to discern a trend in the prevalence of suspected online child sexual exploitation-CSAM, Discord does publish quarterly Transparency Reports that detail our enforcement actions with regard to violations of our Community Guidelines, including violations of our child safety policy, and provide greater insight into the work we do to keep users safe.

13. **What are some new tools or strategies that your platform has implemented to identify CSAM? How closely does your platform work with NCMEC?**

Discord uses PhotoDNA to proactively scan images uploaded to our service in order to detect and report CSAM content and perpetrators to NCMEC, which subsequently works with local law enforcement to take appropriate action. In addition to hash matching, Discord uses internally developed tools (including machine learning techniques) and works with industry partners (including peer companies, non-profits, and researchers) to detect CSAM distribution.

In addition to our use of industry standard tools to detect and remove known CSAM, Discord invests in developing innovative technologies to proactively identify novel CSAM—images that have not previously been detected and so do not appear in available

hash databases. Discord collaborated with industry peers to further develop CLIP, a machine learning image detection and identification algorithm, into a specialized version designed to detect unknown and AI-generated CSAM. In recognition of the industry-wide need to develop and deploy tools to effectively identify novel CSAM, as of October we have made Discord's CSAM-trained CLIP implementation open source, so that we can share our successes with other organizations—without cost—and contribute to the broader fight against CSAM online. By leveraging these tools, Discord's model had an 87 percent increase in recall, i.e. proactively-detected confirmed positive CSAM.

As part of our extensive fight against CSAM, we continued to deepen our partnership with the [Tech Coalition](). One of the most exciting parts of our partnership with the Tech Coalition this year was the launch of [Lantern](), a first-of-its-kind signal sharing program for companies to enhance and strengthen how we detect attempts to sexually exploit and abuse children and teens online. Discord joined other industry partners like Google, Meta, Roblox, Snap, and others to share signals about activity we detect that violates our policies and utilize signals shared by other companies to surface violating activity on their platforms.

Discord also works closely with NCMEC, utilizing their hash database in our internal models as well as developing technology to detect novel CSAM and opening that technology up to other companies through Project Lantern.

14. **What resources or help does your platform provide to victims of CSAM? Does your platform work with local victim groups and professionals?**

Discord's approach to child safety is driven by expert research that draws from diverse perspectives, including survivors. For example, we collaborated with the researchers from Thorn to ensure we were taking a research backed approach to designing Teen Safety Assign feature—a tool to help Discord identify messages that may be indicative of grooming behaviors—to ensure that it reflected the lived experience of teens.

Additionally, through our participation in Tech Coalition and other convenings led by groups like WeProtect Global Alliance, we are committed to constantly learning and evolving our approach to better support young people and those who may be victims of online sexual abuse. For example, earlier this year three Discord employees attended the [Multi-Stakeholder Forum to Combat the Financial Sextortion of Young People](), where discussions about developing safety tools and approaches centered the experiences of young people and victims.

Discord has also participated in the [2022 WeProtect Global Alliance]() convening which featured a presentation from the Brave Movement, a survivor-centered global movement

fighting to end childhood sexual violence.

15. **What are the top technical hurdles your company faces in combatting CSAM?**

Discord is proud of its work to develop and make open source new tools and technologies to better detect, remove, and halt the spread of not just known CSAM, but AI-generated CSAM and other text-based threats to child safety online, such as grooming. As discussed above, we have invested in a tool to proactively identify novel CSAM—images that have not previously been detected and so do not appear in available hash databases. We have also invested in new ways to detect the exploitation of minors (commonly referred to as grooming).

Effective tools that keep children safe online should be industry standards, not a means for companies to gain a competitive advantage. We will continue our work to build new tools and share our successes with other companies and organizations.

16. **There seem to be competing views on how to regulate algorithms. Some suggest that more transparency is needed, while others want more privacy. Can you provide your perspective on whether more or less transparency is needed when it comes to algorithms?**

As an initial matter, it is important to clarify that Discord is a real-time communications platform. On Discord, content from other users is displayed in real time in the order in which it is posted. Content on private servers can only be viewed by users who have joined the server by invitation or request. Discord users can be invited to specific servers by other users, or they may find servers that they want to join via a keyword search available through Discord's "Explore Discoverable Servers" function.

Discord has experimented with features that leverage algorithms; for instance, highlighting a limited amount of user-generated content to community members. To be clear, none of these features promote or encourage virality of posts (like public trending topics or stories), because the content being surfaced is user-specific and limited to users who are already members of the community where the feature is active. The technology powering the features is content agnostic. That is, user engagement is the critical element in determining what is highlighted; the underlying content is not a factor.

Discord is not a service designed to maximize engagement by an algorithm picking and choosing the content users see. Rather, Discord emphasizes real time interaction and connection among friends. Moreover, where Discord offers features that leverage algorithms to suggest content, the company prioritizes giving users choice, for instance

the ability to opt-in or opt-out of such features.

Discord provides transparency around its limited use of algorithms while still preserving user privacy. Beyond that, I cannot speak to algorithms that Discord does not deploy and are otherwise outside my scope of experience and expertise.

17. **Do you believe that large companies and platforms like yours can use algorithms to stifle innovation or small businesses?**

Discord is an innovator, not a large company. We have fewer than 1,000 employees.

18. **What do you believe is the role of government in regulating algorithms? What, if any, unintended consequences would there be if Congress gets involved?**

I do not believe I have the experience or perspective to determine the proper role of government in regulating algorithms.

19. **Are you aware of your platform using surveillance advertisements to target children (anyone under the age of 18) with specific ads? If so, in your opinion, how can this be mitigated?**

No, Discord does not engage in this behavior..

20. **Beyond surveillance advertisements, are there any other algorithmic-based practices being implemented that are particularly detrimental to children? In your opinion, how can this be mitigated?**

Discord is a real-time communications platform that does not rely on algorithmic virality to drive usership. Discord does not have awards, quantification, or down-vote or up-vote features that incentivize users to post certain types of content over others. Discord does not use algorithms to recommend or amplify content to users from servers of which they are not already a member. As such, Discord does not have the same expertise in this area as some of its peer companies in order to opine on potential mitigation.

21. **Are you aware of any surveillance advertisements or algorithms that are used to target children, specifically to promote drugs and the sale of narcotics?**

No.