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For Immediate Release

**JOINT STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE YVETTE CLARKE AND
COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS ON TRACKING AMERICANS TO
PROTESTS AND PLACES OF WORSHIP**

WASHINGTON, July 31, 2020—Today, a bipartisan group of members of Congress filed a letter with the Federal Trade Commission about companies using cell phone location data acquired in the process of placing mobile advertising to track Americans to their places of worship and to the Black Lives Matter protests. In response, Representative Yvette Clarke and Federal Communications Commissioner Geoffrey Starks issued the following statement:

“For communities of color, Internet access has been a crucial tool for amplifying our narratives and mobilizing Americans for change. And smartphones have allowed us to shine a spotlight on tragedies like the killing of George Floyd. Because we believe so strongly in the power of connectivity, we must speak up when bad actors use those tools to threaten Americans’ privacy and First Amendment rights.

“As the letter explains, advertising companies have recklessly allowed personal data, specifically data generated for the purpose of deciding where to place advertisements, to be monetized and siphoned into massive dossiers on Americans and where they exercise their rights to worship and protest. That’s not just alarming; it’s dangerous. We urge the Federal Trade Commission to quickly investigate these troubling practices.”

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