

DEBBIE DINGELL

6TH DISTRICT, MICHIGAN

102 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4071

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE
SUBCOMMITTEES ON
HEALTH

INNOVATION, DATA, AND COMMERCE
COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES

SUBCOMMITTEES ON
WATER, WILDLIFE, AND FISHERIES
ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
SELECT SUBCOMMITTEE ON
THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 25, 2024

DISTRICT OFFICES:

2006 HOGBACK ROAD
SUITE 7
ANN ARBOR, MI 48105
(734) 481-1100

WOODHAVEN CITY HALL
21869 WEST ROAD
WOODHAVEN, MI 48183
(313) 278-2936

WEBSITE: DEBBIEDINGELL.HOUSE.GOV

348

The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel
Chairwoman
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street NE
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairwoman Rosenworcel:

This letter is in regard to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) attention and interest in addressing the threat of domestic abusers exploiting connectivity tools in vehicles to harass and intimidate their partners. We must take proactive measures to address the areas in which connected vehicles are vulnerable to exploitation, and I am exploring avenues to address this through legislative action.

It is important to provide survivors of domestic violence with secure communication channels free from the threat of stalking and harm. My goal is to also work collaboratively with you, automakers, domestic violence groups, and other stakeholders to ensure well-intentioned technological innovations do not create new challenges and risks for survivors. Perpetrators of domestic violence often utilize methods of surveillance and control against their targets, and it is essential to consider their safety and well-being. Connected vehicles could potentially be exploited by abusers to monitor and track survivors, heightening their sense of vulnerability, and hindering their availability to carry out functions of their everyday life, including going to work, taking their children to school, doing grocery shopping, and more.

This includes implementing robust security measures in connected vehicles to prevent unauthorized access and misuse. Additionally, raising awareness among survivors about the potential risks associated with connected technologies and providing them with resources and support to enhance their safety and privacy is crucial. Any remedy must address transparency measures that allow consumers to understand who can access their data and to what extent they can control that access. By working together, we can create a safer environment for survivors of all ages, empowering them to pursue freedom from domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and harassment.

We need to collaborate with law enforcement agencies, survivor advocacy organizations, and technology companies to develop protocols and guidelines for responding to incidents of domestic abuse involving connected vehicles. My engagement with stakeholders has revealed a shared recognition and acknowledgement of and the need for urgent action to safeguard survivors due to potential misuse of connected vehicle services. Stakeholders emphasize the consequences of technology-enabled stalking on survivors' lives and underscore the imperative for robust protections and support mechanisms.

I would like to work with the FCC, my colleagues in Congress, and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive understanding of and solutions to the misuse of connected vehicle technologies, as well as the broader challenges and unique needs of survivors in accessing resources and assistance, such as ensuring that reporting and notification processes are confidential and trauma-informed. We can create a safer environment for survivors of all ages, empowering them to pursue freedom from domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and harassment. Specifically, any remedy must acknowledge that the reporting and notification process will present a heightened risk of abuse, and consider proactive methods to curb retaliation from an abuser. Solutions must also consider the ability of survivors to swiftly revoke or disable an abuser's access to their activity on connected vehicle technology, ability to remove sensitive data that has already been stored in an app and ensure that the abuser cannot utilize other methods, such as a service request, to access that data.

Throughout my career, I've been actively engaged in safeguarding the well-being and rights of survivors, holding domestic abusers accountable, and promoting advancements within the automotive industry. I appreciate the FCC's interest in addressing and prioritizing the protection of domestic violence survivors. It is incumbent upon us to continue collaborating closely to develop and implement effective legislative and regulatory frameworks that safeguard survivors' rights and well-being. I look forward to working with your agency on this matter.

Sincerely,



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress