



# The Tech Oversight Project.

## MEMORANDUM

To: Interested Parties

From: Sacha Haworth, Executive Director, Tech Oversight Project

Re: Don't buy what Google is selling: monopolies are a national security threat. Congress should act faster than the courts.

Date: April 23, 2025

---

**PURPOSE:** *Google is a national security threat because monopolies don't share American interests. With a monopoly breakup still years away, Congress needs to protect U.S. national security and innovation by legislating now.* Spanning back to the first Trump Administration, the Justice Department has aggressively pursued consequential and successful antitrust cases against Google, challenging its market-suffocating monopolies in Search and Ad Tech. The Justice Department, under both parties, racked up two historic victories, and in the process, they've also shown how Google's illegal business practices are [undermining the U.S. economy in AI](#) and our [national security](#).

[Democratic](#) and [Republican](#) administrations are winning in the Judiciary, but Congressional wins have been few and far between. With the AI race against China raising the stakes, now is the right time for Congress to take up the mantle and act decisively.

Google [says that tech accountability will enable China](#), but that couldn't be further from the truth. Their record actually shows that they have deep business interests in China (despite not offering Search, Google Play, or YouTube), and have often been the cause of massive data breaches themselves. Why would anyone heed Google's vague threats when faced with their concrete (and troubling) record?

We view the problem as two-fold: Google needs to be broken up and reined in to fully unleash American innovation, and Google's business ties to CCP-affiliated companies deserve closer scrutiny.

Through pro-competition legislation, comprehensive privacy legislation, robust appropriations for antitrust enforcers, and targeted oversight, Congress can put its thumb on the scale to put the U.S. economy back in the driver's seat.

---

### ***Market Competition: DeepSeek is the “canary in the coal mine”***

Competitive markets produce scrappy, agile winners. Monopoly markets produce bloated companies that no longer need to be innovative; they only need to be unavoidable. As Chinese AI companies continue to surprise markets with advanced technology and efficiency, Congress needs to take a closer look at Big Tech monopolies like Google (and its Gemini model) that are falling behind due to years of unchecked power, despite funneling mountains of cash into inefficient AI models. DeepSeek might be the first [challenger to emerge](#), but they might not be the only company to lap Google’s bloated business.

In a *New York Times* [opinion piece](#), former FTC Chair Lina Khan bluntly laid the problem out, saying, “DeepSeek is the canary in the coal mine. It’s warning us that when there isn’t enough competition, our tech industry grows vulnerable to its Chinese rivals, threatening U.S. geopolitical power in the 21st century.”

Khan added that despite Google being “awash in cash, computing power, and data capacity,” they’ve been “challenged on the cheap.” Google also happens to enjoy other advantages: a U.S. government ban on the sales of cutting-edge chips and chip-making equipment to Chinese firms, and it is headquartered in the free enterprise capital of the world.

Congress put Google in a position to lead, so what gives?

Rather than helping the U.S. meet this moment with the urgency it deserves, Google has been busy [raking in cash from its illegal monopolies](#), [buying back its own stock](#) to gas up prices, and reinventing itself to suit the politics of the moment – whether as “resistance sympathizers, social justice warriors, MAGA enthusiasts,” as Khan notes.

Google fell asleep at the wheel instead of pioneering new pathbreaking innovations and breakthrough technologies. They broke the law, and Google does not deserve special protections under the guise of vague national security threats they’ve made for decades.

In fact, it’s their business model and dealings in China that should raise Congressional eyebrows.

### ***National Security: Google’s ad tech business helps foreign adversaries like China target high-profile government employees***

Through market manipulation, Google has embraced its monopolistic ubiquity to stockpile massive amounts of highly sensitive and sophisticated data from everyone with a smartphone. The company is hoovering up your information at frenetic speeds if you use Google Search, Gmail, Chrome, Google Docs, or use an Android device. The company’s data mining ranges from innocuous things, like your device type, to incredibly granular details, like your specific location, devices that have accessed your network, and voluntary information shared across other apps and devices on your network.

Google's ad tech business uses its limitless access to data to create profiles about you and your family. In turn, it sells access to that data to companies around the world. While it was recently [found to operate an illegal monopoly in this space](#), which drags down the entire U.S. economy by raising the cost of doing business, new revelations show that Google's ad tech business is empowering foreign adversaries like China to target high-profile government personnel.

In a recent [Wired investigation](#), reporters found that Google, through its ad tech platforms, is offering companies around the world the ability to target U.S. citizens believed to suffer from chronic illnesses and financial distress, among other categories of personal data. Their investigation found that among Google's "audience segments" included ones that target "U.S. government employees who are considered 'decision makers' working 'specifically in the field of national security.'"

Other fields include individuals who work at companies registered with the State Department to manufacture and export defense-related technologies, from missiles and space launch vehicles to cryptographic systems that house classified military and intelligence data.

Privacy watchdogs like ENFORCE and EPIC note that Google "directly" and "indirectly" provides foreign adversaries, including China, with "extraordinarily sensitive" commercial data in what they believe is a "[national security crisis](#)."

"Google's purported self-regulation cannot protect us," says EPIC senior counsel Sara Geoghegan, whose complaint points to restrictions on data broker deals cemented last year under a new federal law, the *Protecting Americans' Data from Foreign Adversaries Act* (PADFA). According to Geoghegan, Google's advertising tools pose a unique national threat, one that Congress has specifically charged the FTC with eliminating.

In the hands of adversaries (or even companies without a firewall from the CCP), Google is helping them put a target on the back of U.S. judges, military personnel, executive agency staff, Members of Congress, and Congressional staff.

Findings like this render Google's Chicken Little cries about national security meaningless — and outright false.

### ***Countering Google's Messaging: Basic concern trolling***

For years, Google and its Big Tech allies have trotted out the same tired lie over and over again: Antitrust enforcement and competition reform are a national security threat. That dog won't hunt (and it's never hunted for that matter). Let's weigh Google's vague threats against their concrete record:

#### Google's China Business

Though Google does not offer its search engine or app store in China, it [still maintains an advertising business aimed at providing CCP-connected companies sensitive data](#) on people around the world. The company also provides its Android operating system to phones sold in

China. As recent reports have shown, this is an active national security threat. Jonathan Kanter and Gail Slater's lawsuits didn't force Google into the CCP's arms, they did that on their own.

### Google's Censorship Regime

[Reporting by The Guardian](#) found that as early as this year, Google was still cooperating with Chinese and Russian government requests to take down content and censor dissidents.

In 2018, after years of promising the company wouldn't support authoritarianism in China, [Google did an about-face by developing a censored version](#) of its platform for use in China and was forced to backtrack under pressure from human rights organizations.

### Spreading CCP Propaganda

YouTube has [inconsistently enforced its labeling policy](#), allowing multiple Chinese state media channels to play videos without flagging content as state-sponsored. Chinese state media and local governments [paid YouTube influencers](#) to spread pro-China propaganda. YouTube [declined to take down pro-China influencer channels](#), claiming they weren't "linked to coordinated influence operations." Chinese state media also [used YouTube to spread propaganda](#) related to Hong Kong protests.

Despite years of crying wolf every time there's a specter of oversight, Google's protestations over U.S. national security issues have never moved beyond vague concern trolling. Congress needs to see beyond the feigned concerns and hold this monopoly accountable for its transgressions that have endangered our data privacy and for holding back American innovation.

---

### **AVENUES FOR CONGRESS:**

- **Fully fund the DOJ Antitrust Division and FTC:** With years of appeals ahead, the Justice Department needs the tools to see its antitrust cases through, and both antitrust enforcement agencies should be given greater funding to pursue new cases and stop bad actors from slowing down the U.S. economy.
- **Reconnect HSR filing fees to the DOJ Antitrust Division:** In the March 2024 spending package, merger filing fees, which historically have helped fund the Antitrust Division review process, were diverted away to the Justice Department's general fund. This goes against the spirit of the bipartisan *Merger Filing Fee Modernization Act*, which was passed in 2022 and right-sized the filing fee schedule to ensure that small businesses pay less. Congress should correct this as soon as possible.
- **Advance the AMERICA ACT:** With the DOJ winning its antitrust case against Google's ad tech business, Congress should step in to ensure monopolies like Google's can never happen again. The bipartisan *AMERICA Act*, introduced by Senators Mike Lee and Amy

Klobuchar, prohibits large digital advertising companies from owning more than one part of the digital ad ecosystem if they process more than \$20 billion in digital ad transactions. We think this bill deserves consideration in both Chambers. Read Senator Lee's [call to action here](#).

- **Don't forget about AICOA and OAMA:** While Congress was unsuccessful in its efforts to pass competition reform bills in 2022, Senator Blumenthal [recently announced](#) that he and Senator Marsha Blackburn planned on reintroducing the *Open App Markets Act*, which would stamp out Google and Apple's app store monopolies and open up the market to new and innovative companies.
- **Jumpstart talks on a comprehensive privacy package:** The best way to protect ourselves from Google's ad tech monopoly and cooperation with foreign advertisers is to pass a comprehensive data privacy package that includes data minimization as a north star.
- **Raise questions about Google's Ad Tech business in the context of PADFA:** Last year, Congress passed the bipartisan *Protecting Americans' Data from Foreign Adversaries Act*, which gives the FTC authority to stop companies from selling Americans' data to countries like China. Google operates an advertising business in China that provides data to CCP-connected companies. We believe this is an area for members to ask pointed questions and ensure compliance.
- **Continued oversight and investigations:** Over the past months, new reports have revealed that Google provides granular details to advertisers around the world about sensitive governmental personnel, and we've also learned that Meta, which has a significantly smaller digital advertising business, brought in [\\$18 billion through digital advertising revenue in China](#). Congress can use its subpoena power to answer key questions like:
  - How much revenue does Google make from China?
  - What is the current state of its relationship with the CCP?
  - What kind of data is Google turning over to the CCP? Does that include data on Americans?
  - Does Google store data in China? Does that include Americans' data?
  - Has Google shared technology with the CCP to gain access or maintain access to the Chinese market?

---

**CONCLUSION:** In order to credibly claim you're concerned about U.S. national security, you have to actually operate your business in the interests of our country, and time and again, Google has placated hostile foreign powers like the CCP at the expense of the U.S.

Google, like Meta, operates an advertising business in China, which is predicated on selling massive amounts of highly sensitive data on Americans. Google is a clear and present danger that is holding our country and economy back, and the only reasonable path forward is to break Google up.