

JAMES E. RISCH, IDAHO, CHAIRMAN

PETE RICKETTS, NEBRASKA
DAVID McCORMICK, PENNSYLVANIA
STEVE DAINES, MONTANA
BILL HAGERTY, TENNESSEE
JOHN BARRASSO, WYOMING
MIKE LEE, UTAH
RAND PAUL, KENTUCKY
TED CRUZ, TEXAS
RICK SCOTT, FLORIDA
JOHN R. CURTIS, UTAH
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS

JEANNE SHAHEEN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, DELAWARE
CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, CONNECTICUT
TIM Kaine, VIRGINIA
JEFF MERKLEY, OREGON
CORY A. BOOKER, NEW JERSEY
BRIAN SCHATZ, HAWAII
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, MARYLAND
TAMMY DUCKWORTH, ILLINOIS
JACKY ROSEN, NEVADA

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

Mr. Sundar Pichai
CEO of Alphabet and Google
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway
Mountain View, CA 94043

Dear Mr. Pichai,

We write to express our appreciation that Google representatives took the time to meet with the Moldovan Central Election Commission (CEC) in June of this year ahead of the country's upcoming September 28 parliamentary elections. We urge you to remain engaged with the CEC and devote sufficient resources toward ensuring that Russian-backed disinformation and political financing cannot prosper during the pre-election period in Moldova.

President Maia Sandu has already warned that "the Russian Federation wants to control the Republic of Moldova" and has a plan to use online platforms to spread anti-democratic messages. Independent non-governmental organizations concur with her assessment, with premier civil society group WatchDog.MD assessing that Russian actors have already launched "massive YouTube ad campaigns." As individuals who have run for office ourselves, we know that campaigns are not decided on Election Day. Engagement during the pre-election period is critical to ensure that elections are not just free, but also fair. Russia's attempt at interference in Moldova's 2024 presidential election and EU referendum gave the international community a preview into Kremlin tactics. We must not be caught off guard this year.

While we must be agnostic to the results of Moldova's elections, we cannot be indifferent to foreign powers' efforts to put their thumb on the scale for parties or candidates. Where that interference endeavors to utilize U.S. based platforms, we must be proactive in our approach. Moldova is at a critical moment in its history - it is on the cusp of European Union membership. Ultimately, whether to join the European Union will be a decision for the Moldovan people - but we must do our part to ensure that it is indeed for them to decide.

The United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom have all recognized the grave threat that Russian actors' disinformation efforts pose to Moldovan democracy. We urge Google to use this moment to help ensure that Moldova's elections remain free and fair.

Sincerely,

Senator Jeanne Shaheen



Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

Thom Tillis



United States Senator