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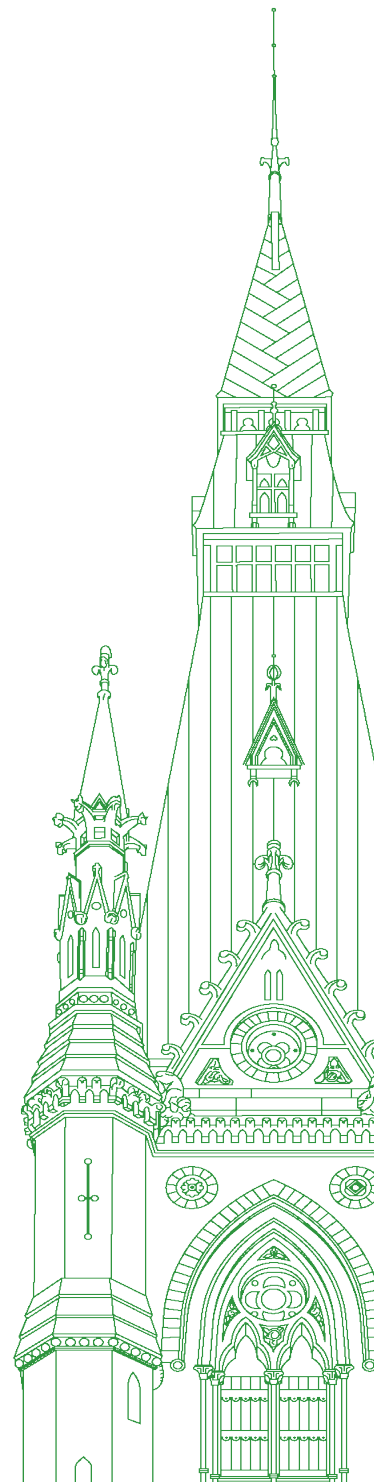
Standing Committee on Industry and Technology

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Thursday, June 18, 2026

Chair: Ben Carr



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• (1100)

[Translation]

The Chair (Ben Carr (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.)): This meeting is called to order.

Good morning, everyone.

[English]

Happy last day. Knock on wood, but I believe we are on the precipice of rising for the summer, and this will be our last industry committee meeting. Toward the end of the meeting, I'll have a few things to say about that and about what we have to look forward to in the fall.

[Translation]

To begin, I can confirm that all audiovisual checks have been completed and that everything is fine.

[English]

Welcome to Mr. Housefather, Mr. Bains and Monsieur Ste-Marie, who are joining us virtually today.

Colleagues, we have been undertaking, as you know, a study on fraud. Today will be the last hour we've dedicated to that study.

Joining us from Google Canada is Jeanette Patell, the director of government affairs and public policy for Canada.

Ms. Patell, you have up to five minutes for your opening remarks, after which there will be a line of questioning from members of the recognized political parties around the table.

With that, I will turn the floor over to you, Ms. Patell.

Jeanette Patell (Director, Government Affairs and Public Policy, Google Canada): Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the committee, for the opportunity to speak before you today.

My name is Jeanette Patell. I'm the director of government affairs and public policy for Google Canada. At Google, our mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful. Keeping our users safe is foundational to that mission.

Financial fraud and scams exploit people and undermine the trust that is essential to the digital ecosystem. This society-wide challenge has grown in scale and complexity, with global fraud losses estimated at nearly \$580 billion for 2025, according to Nasdaq's "Global Financial Crime Report". This is driven by sophisticated

transnational criminal operations that combine online and offline methods.

At Google, keeping our users and partners safe is our top priority. To tackle this global problem at scale, we've invested for over two decades in advanced technologies, robust policies, legal action and expert teams dedicated to protecting the users of our products and services. Our interventions have significantly improved with our latest innovations in AI, specifically our Gemini-powered tools. While our teams have long used advanced AI to identify and stop scammers, Gemini takes that work even further. Our models analyze billions of signals, including account age, behavioural cues and campaign patterns, to stop threats before they reach people. Gemini's superior understanding of intent also allows us to spot malicious content and pre-emptively block it, even when it's designed to evade detection. The impact speaks for itself. In 2025, Gemini-powered tools helped us catch over 99% of policy-violating ads before they ever served.

We also apply rigorous anti-scam architecture at the device and ecosystem level, on Android and Chrome. Android prevents over 10 billion malicious calls and messages every month, while Google Play Protect, which is active on three billion user devices, scans 200 billion apps daily. On YouTube, tools like AI likeness detection allow public figures to identify and remove deepfakes that misuse their identity for scams. Gmail continues to block 99.9% of spam, malware and dangerous links before they ever reach an inbox.

Google Chrome "safe browsing" protects more than five billion devices worldwide by automatically warning users when they attempt to navigate to dangerous websites or download malicious files. Google makes safe browsing technology freely available to other browsers and Internet companies. It is natively deployed in major competing browsers, such as Safari and Firefox, and operates across diverse operating systems, including iOS and Android. I'm proud to say that the core engineering and continuous development of the Google safe browsing system is driven directly by teams based in our Montreal office. That's Canadian talent working directly on systems that keep billions of users safe around the world.

While these technical defences are robust, no single entity can solve this alone. It's why we helped launch the Global Signal Exchange, expanding to over 1.2 billion shared signals among more than 300 organizations, and we actively provide dedicated reporting channels through our priority flagger program to Canadian financial institutions, law enforcement and such government organizations as the Canadian anti-fraud centre and the Competition Bureau of Canada.

When technical blocks are not enough, we take direct action through law enforcement co-operation and litigation. For example, in December 2025 Google joined a cross-sector intelligence-sharing initiative led by the RCMP. Called Operation Maple Disruption, it led to thousands of disruptive actions being taken against scammers.

In the U.S., we've initiated proactive litigation to dismantle major criminal networks. This includes the Outsider and Lighthouse operations, both phishing-as-a-service networks that distributed "phishing kits" to allow criminals to deploy massive fake text campaigns; and the Darcula syndicate, which stole data from nearly 900,000 credit cards. Our legal action is designed to tackle this challenge at the source and dismantle the core infrastructure of these operations.

• (1105)

[Translation]

Finally, we are committed to empowering Canadians. We are proud to support the Together Against Fraud campaign of the Canadian Anti-Fraud Coalition by providing financial support to amplify its message of awareness. We are also developing workshops specifically for Canadian seniors to help them use AI tools to identify and avoid common online threats. We welcome the upcoming opportunities to work with members of Parliament to raise awareness in their communities.

Google is committed to working as a dedicated partner of the Government of Canada in addressing the challenge of financial fraud and deepfakes. Safe and trusted online environments are not created by accident. They are the result of intentional design, strong management and strong co-operation.

[English]

As this committee looks to the future, we believe a national anti-fraud strategy should be built on three core principles: enabling information sharing across the ecosystem, incentivizing proactive community action by digital platforms, and investing in public education.

We look forward to working with this committee to build a safer and more secure digital future for all Canadians.

[Translation]

Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Patell.

Madam Dancho, to start us off, the floor will be yours for six minutes.

Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Thank you Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Ms. Patell, for being with us today. We greatly appreciate your feedback and also your overview of the work that Google is doing to combat frauds and scams.

I want to ask you about a class action lawsuit that has been filed, resulting from an incident in, I believe, 2025, as reported by La Presse, in which a Quebec woman is alleging she lost more than \$30,000 after she clicked on a YouTube advertisement that allegedly had an AI-generated image of our Prime Minister, Mark Carney, advertising some digital currency investment scheme. Ultimately, she lost upwards of \$30,000, according to her claims.

I do appreciate that this matter is before the courts. That being the case, I'm not asking you to comment specifically on matters before the courts, of course, but I do believe it raises a broader question that we've been seized with at this committee. Canadians are increasingly encountering AI-generated scams that impersonate public figures, impersonate a CBC news article and the like. I know you're very familiar with this problem. What responsibility do you believe Google and other platforms have—I know you have YouTube in your purview, but there are also Meta and others—regarding scams like this, which end up on your platforms? What responsibility do you have to Canadians in this regard?

Jeanette Patell: Thank you for the question.

Situations like this are heartbreaking, obviously, and they really speak to the human cost that criminals are extracting in their targeting of vulnerable Canadians.

When I zoom out and I look at the role that Google plays here, it's one in which we're playing a leadership role, at multiple levels, in hardening our systems through three pillars. I'll just speak to those in a macro sense first.

One is to build products that are safe by design—systems that can prevent, detect and respond rapidly to these types of emerging threats—while working in partnership, because no one can do this alone, to build public education.

However, to speak specifically to this type of issue that we saw, we respond rapidly to improve the ability of our systems to catch this. It's no surprise that, since we're in an adversarial space, criminals constantly attempt to circumvent the protections that we put in place.

We enforce at the front line, but we are also able to respond quickly when we see trends in scams. For example, when we saw an increase in public figure endorsement scams like this, we responded by rapidly deploying a team targeted at that issue, sharpening our detection tools and applying a robust misrepresentation policy. That had real results: We removed 700,000 accounts as a result, and we saw a 90% drop in the reports of this type of scam. What I'm saying is that our responsibility is to ensure that we are strengthening our systems, and we're doing that every day.

• (1110)

Raquel Dancho: You mentioned that you respond rapidly. If I clicked on a link like this, let's say, and I made an e-transfer from my bank, and we realized it was a scam and my bank reported it to you, how quickly would you remove this scam? If you find out today from Desjardins that there's a scam on your platform, how quickly can you take it down?

Jeanette Patell: It's hard to speak to a hypothetical, but we do respond quickly.

I think what you—

Raquel Dancho: I'm sorry. I'll just clarify. We had Wealthisimple here, and Wealthisimple mentioned something to the effect that it took four days for Meta to take down a scam that Wealthisimple had reported. Is there an equivalent time frame for Google?

Jeanette Patell: It really would be context-dependent. We do work to act rapidly. We've built tools—like the priority flagger program, for example—so that we can accelerate the review of reports of problematic ads by trusted and credible partners, including, for example, the Canadian anti-fraud centre. That would bring them to the front of the queue for assessment.

Raquel Dancho: Thank you.

How is YouTube vetting this? If there's an RBC ad, or a Mark Carney ad or a CBC ad, how are you vetting it to make sure that it is CBC, or that it is the Prime Minister's office or that it is RBC? Do you have a process?

Jeanette Patell: We do.

Raquel Dancho: In this case, it failed, allegedly. I know this has not been proven.

Jeanette Patell: I think of this as a multi-layered, multipronged approach. You want to have an “at the front door” protection system, like your security system at the front door, to prevent bad actors from even entering in the first place. That's where we use something we call “advertiser verification”. We apply an onboarding trust assessment. What we're trying to do there is assess the veracity of the actor on our systems and then triage them into either a standard or enhanced verification process. For something like financial services, that is considered a higher-risk sector, so they would go through an enhanced verification process.

In addition to that, we would have our systems working at the back end, constantly analyzing their behavioural signals so that we can understand what the risk profile of this actor is.

There are a whole host of systems that are deployed, including in the onboarding process, to ensure that we have the right people—

Raquel Dancho: Thank you.

I'm running out of time, so I'll just conclude by saying that it seems to be that each platform has a different system for proving whether it is a legitimate RBC ad, a legitimate PMO ad or whatever it might be. There doesn't seem to be any uniformity. Something we're exploring is whether, perhaps, there should be some uniformity required by government regulation. These are things that we're exploring at this committee, the kinds of recommendations we could make. I'll just leave you to comment or respond, and then I'm out of time. Thank you.

Jeanette Patell: We welcome a conversation around things like this: How do you verify advertisers?

I would just offer to this committee that we need to avoid creating a road map for actors to circumvent. That is something that we encounter every day. That is only to say that there needs to be a portfolio of approaches that are dynamic in nature, so that we can use the power of AI to really test the veracity of the types of content that are entering the ecosystem.

This is a conversation that we welcome. There are steps that the Government of Canada can take to enable that, and there are steps that digital platforms can also take to continue to raise the bar.

We see ourselves as a leader in this space. We've been rolling out advertiser verification across 240 countries. We've been doing that proactively. Now, over 90% of advertisers on our systems are verified. That's certainly a conversation we welcome.

• (1115)

Raquel Dancho: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Madam Dancho.

Madam O'Rourke, I understand that you may be splitting some time with Ms. Begum. I'll leave the two of you to sort that out. Between you, there are six minutes. The floor is yours.

Dominique O'Rourke (Guelph, Lib.): Terrific. Thank you, Chair.

Thank you for being here, Madam Patell.

We've heard from a number of witnesses that we need an industrial-scale response to these scams, and that it's transnational crime. I can't think of a larger company or one that is more global than Google, which is also, actually, a verb: You're so big, you're a verb.

You talked about the Global Signal Exchange. You participated in Operation Maple Disruption. What is missing? You said we should enable information sharing across ecosystems, that the platform should be proactive, community education.... We're doing those things. What have you seen around the world that Canada should consider adopting to catch that extra 10% of spam ads or fraudulent ads?

Jeanette Patell: Thank you for the question. It's such a good question.

I think, even in the question that was posed by Ms. Dancho, one thing that jumped out at me was how many different pieces of information there are, how many different players there would be in any given scam scenario. Google would have a piece of the puzzle, a financial institution would have another piece of the puzzle, but we'd be unable to knit together the full picture without having an opportunity to bring that together. When people talk about the need for information exchange, it is because of this: If you do not aggregate this data in a way that can be meaningful, you have only noise.

The Global Signal Exchange is something that we created just over a year ago. It's still relatively new, but countries like the United Kingdom and Poland are members. What that has enabled is.... Most recently, there was a new case in which the U.K. version of the FBI ingested some content into that system. Google was able to take that, expand our understanding of the threat landscape with that particular case and, under appropriate lawful authorities, share that back with the U.K. As a result, through cross-border collaboration with authorities in west Africa, they were able to take down a major scam operation with tens of thousands of associated accounts. That kind of cross-border collaboration and cross-stakeholder collaboration are essential if we're going to see these types of results.

I would encourage Canada to explore joining the Global Signal Exchange. We certainly want there to be an opportunity for either law enforcement or government to join. I can talk about more areas for partnership and public education, but that's just one example of how it has real results.

Dominique O'Rourke: I have only two seconds. Is data sovereignty the challenge to participating in something like that? Please answer yes or no. I want to cede my time to MP Begum.

Jeanette Patell: No, absolutely not.

Dominique O'Rourke: Okay.

Doly Begum (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.): Thank you so much, MP O'Rourke.

Thank you so much, Ms. Patell, for being here.

It is impressive that Google can remove and block billions of ads before they reach us. You've just mentioned the millions of accounts that were suspended. I'm quite impressed, actually, by the number that you have, in terms of the success rate. I know a lot of them are repeat offenders as well, in terms of those who try to manoeuvre...the ways they come back to the platform.

One thing I am wondering is this: Are there ways you can protect users from getting targeted by the same suspects who keep coming back? That seems to not be part of the way that you have calculated

that success rate yet, eliminating or preventing bad actors from even re-entering. That would be my first question.

Secondly, as we're limited in time, I want to ask this: What is the most useful step that our government can take to help platforms like yours help people avoid fraud and scams, given what's going on right now and how perverse it has been?

• (1120)

Jeanette Patell: In terms of preventing reoffenders from.... I think of scammers and fraud on our systems. They are abusing our systems. They are toxic to the health of the digital economy, and we are very invested in protecting an operational, trusted digital economy. We are very incentivized to prevent reoffending.

When we look at the success rate.... Circumvention of an account termination is a violation in and of itself. We do everything we are able to do to detect ties to formerly suspended accounts and to understand and map the patterns that are perhaps not apparent to the human eye, so to speak. That is something we are doing to understand linkages between actors and past accounts. That is part of our success, and it includes preventing reoffenders in this space.

The reality is, as with any kind of criminality, that this is a fight without a finish line. We are dealing with sophisticated criminal organizations that constantly adapt and are looking for new opportunities to exploit vulnerabilities and identify new vulnerabilities. Our commitment is to continually invest in these systems.

To answer the second part of the question, about what steps you can take in addition to the partnership—which I would really encourage Canada to explore—public education is really important. We need Canadians to be equipped with the tools, training and resources to be able to identify and avoid scams. A scam is often a journey that they are on. It might not be a single transaction. How can we all be partners in helping them recognize when something is off and support them in getting off that particular track? I'm happy to share how we've done that with a couple of our product designs. Having a much broader remit in terms of the resourcing for public education would be super helpful.

I know we're running short on time, but I would also apply that to law enforcement. Providing resourcing to law enforcement to give them the capabilities and the training to participate in these types of operations will go a long way in supporting the efficacy of what they bring to the table.

Doly Begum: I'm glad that you say that, because we actually have current legislation—

The Chair: Ms. Begum, I'm afraid we are quite a bit over the time. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

Mr. Ste-Marie, you have the floor for six minutes.

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette—Manawan, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good afternoon to my colleagues.

Good afternoon, Ms. Patell. Thank you for being here.

Let me start with a specific case. Three weeks ago, my assistant Marc-André saw a fake YouTube ad in which a fake Mark Carney was telling people to make investments. The ad was similar to the one that led to a class action lawsuit a year ago. We are still seeing fake ads like this a year later.

My assistant took a screenshot and sent it to YouTube to tell them to be careful, that it was a fraudulent ad that should be taken down. He received no acknowledgement or feedback from YouTube, and the fraudulent advertising continued for days. Is that what you call being proactive against fraudulent advertising?

Jeanette Patell: Thank you for the question. That is obviously a very serious situation. I will answer in English, just to be more specific.

[English]

I'm not familiar with this particular situation. It sounds as though this is something we should be exploring to understand exactly what took place. I'm happy to work with your office to understand that more clearly.

In these cases, we want to see ads reported, and we have a reporting mechanism for ads that will allow us to understand the ad identifier associated with it, so that we can trace it back. When things like this happen—this is a public figure endorsement scam—we absolutely want to be acting rapidly on them. I'm happy to work with your office to understand the situation and how we can be better in responding to it.

As I said, this is a trend that we've observed in the ecosystem. We have been sharpening our detection tools, but it sounds to me like this was able to get through, and we want to be able to action that rapidly.

• (1125)

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Thank you.

It's not just about a specific case, but about the mechanism in general. It was the same thing with Meta. Witnesses told us that when they reported fraudulent advertising, it took several days for any follow-up. Earlier, you answered by saying that these were hypothetical questions. This is a specific case, and this kind of thing happens often. So you have to put mechanisms in place to remove those ads immediately.

I want to ask you another question: In Canada, what percentage of YouTube's ad revenues come from fraudulent ads and scams? Do you have that percentage?

[English]

Jeanette Patell: Maybe this is where the business practices and the way our businesses are built might differ from others. I apologize for going into a bit more detail than you might prefer.

Our systems operate such that, when we recognize revenue or generate revenue on an ad, it is generally called a cost-per-click model. What that means is that a user has to interact with that ad before we are paid for that ad. We're not paid in a pre-impression manner. That means that, when I say that our systems have been able to block 99% of problematic ads before they're ever served to a user, we are recognizing zero revenue on those ads. It means that we are not taking money from those fraudsters, because we do not want their money. We do not want an ecosystem to be polluted by that type of activity, because it undermines our entire mission.

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Thank you.

What you're saying is that your platforms like YouTube are running fraudulent ads featuring a fake Mark Carney. One person lost \$30,000 because of that, and you're saying you're not even making money on it. Wouldn't it therefore be urgent to block all those ads?

Along the same lines, why do the advertisers who post these ads on YouTube and your other platforms continue to appear in your ads and your results, even when they have been identified as fraudulent by Quebec's securities regulator, the Autorité des marchés financiers, for example?

[English]

Jeanette Patell: Obviously, this is a real challenge. It's a shared challenge. I would say to you that we're on the same side in this challenge; we are partners in tackling this.

We have been working very hard to sharpen the detection of these types of scams to be able to prevent them from abusing our systems. When it comes to things like public figures, for example, on YouTube, we have developed the likeness detection tool. This tool would allow a public figure to approve or deny the use of their image in content or in advertisements. This is one of the ways that we built products to be able to respond to the threat. The reality is that we're dealing with criminals who are constantly working to circumvent the protections we're putting in place.

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Thank you for your answer, but let me clarify my question.

In Quebec, the Autorité des marchés financiers or the Office de la protection du consommateur have ordered that those ads be removed. Will you commit to immediately complying with those orders, even without a court decision?

[English]

Jeanette Patell: I'm not familiar with that particular situation, so I'll have to defer the question, but I'm happy to come back to you once I have a better understanding of the scenario that you're talking about and what authorities are in question.

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Could you provide an answer in writing? That is required under a law that came into force in Quebec last week. We would appreciate a written response.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Ste-Marie.

• (1130)

[English]

Mr. Falk, I understand you'll be splitting your time with Ms. Borrelli. I'll let the two of you sort that out, but there are five minutes between you.

The floor is yours.

Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and that's correct.

Thanks, Ms. Patell, for your testimony here at committee today.

I have a few questions for you.

On a point of clarification, from the time that you become aware of a fraudulent ad or a scam, how long does it take for you to remove that from your sites?

Jeanette Patell: I think the answer is that it depends. When you look at the kind of scope, breadth of activity and surfaces that would be in play for that question, it would really depend on where and when. We act as rapidly as possible, not only to pull down a problematic piece of content or ad or to identify a malicious site, for example, but also—

Ted Falk: Is there any data you could provide as to how quickly, once you become aware of something, it's removed from your platforms?

Jeanette Patell: It really depends on the type of data. I'm happy to explore what we would be able to provide you in that space. I also want to underline that our efforts are to work not only as rapidly as possible but also as effectively as possible.

Through the Global Signal Exchange, we've been able to scale that response, so we're not only hardening and protecting our systems but also amplifying that globally so that other providers are also able to identify the scam and prevent abuse of their systems.

Ted Falk: Banks have, in many cases, taken responsibility when their customers or clients have been defrauded. What level of responsibility has Google taken when your customers have been defrauded because of a scam that's on your platform?

Jeanette Patell: As I've said, there's a very human cost to criminal activity.

Ted Falk: Do you ever reimburse somebody for the losses they've incurred?

Jeanette Patell: We are very clear on the role that we need to play here in terms of protecting our systems, protecting our users—

Ted Falk: It's just a yes or a no. Do you ever reimburse any of your clients for the losses they've incurred because of a scam that's been on your platform?

Jeanette Patell: There's a lot more complexity than [Inaudible—Editor].

Ted Falk: It's a no. The answer is no. You don't assume any responsibility.

The Chair: Ms. Patell and Mr. Falk, I will ask for one second, because we need to make sure that Ms. Patell's mic is on. Mr. Falk, I've paused the clock, so you need not worry.

I'm going to let Mr. Falk repeat that question, and we'll make sure that your mic is working, Ms. Patell.

Mr. Falk, you may go ahead.

Ted Falk: Ms. Patell, you won't take any responsibility for the losses incurred by customers using your platform from scams on your platform.

Jeanette Patell: We take an incredible amount of responsibility in hardening our systems—

Ted Falk: To what extent would you reimburse anybody?

Jeanette Patell: —and preventing this in the first place.

We recognize the human cost here, and we also recognize that we need to have criminals held accountable for their actions.

Ted Falk: Thank you. I need to split my time.

Kathy Borrelli (Windsor—Tecumseh—Lakeshore, CPC): Ms. Patell, a 2026 study looked at 434 loan apps across several countries and found that 141 appeared to violate national regulatory rules, while 147 appeared to violate Google's own policies. After researchers disclosed the findings, Google removed 93 flagged apps from Google Play, representing more than 300 million cumulative installs.

If these apps were violating Google's own rules, why were they available on Google Play in the first place? Why did it take outside researchers to identify them, and why haven't all of the 147 apps been removed?

Jeanette Patell: There's a lot to unpack there. I'll speak to how we apply our rules to Google Play.

As I said, we review 200 billion apps daily. For example, we found that 95% of problematic apps are being side-loaded. That's an important stat to understand when it comes to the apps that are exploiting sensitive permissions.

Kathy Borrelli: I'm looking particularly at the financial apps that are asking for highly sensitive information, not harmless games or basic utilities. Why isn't the standard for loan, investment, crypto, banking and debt relief apps much higher? Why aren't you catching them before they even reach the users?

• (1135)

Jeanette Patell: There are high standards for apps to be available on Google Play. We are assessing whether apps are valuable on a constant and ongoing basis.

In terms of the specifics of why an outside researcher would have identified one segment of apps to be problematic versus what our assessment led to, I can't speak to that. All I can say is that we are committed to consistently applying our rules across the apps.

We welcome inbound inquiries from external experts. We work with outside experts all the time in this space. I would be happy to bring some of my colleagues to have a conversation with you about the standards we apply for financial services apps in our Google Play store, because it is something that we take incredibly seriously.

I've said before that this is an ongoing challenge. We are in a very adversarial space, where criminals are seeking to circumvent protections. We welcome the conversation, because we take it so seriously, but this is a fight without a finish line. We are going to have to continually show up, day to day, to invest in hardening our systems, and we can do that only in partnership.

Kathy Borrelli: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Borrelli.

Mr. Bardeesy, the floor is yours, sir, for five minutes.

Karim Bardeesy (Taiaiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Thank you, Chair.

I'm sorry I'm not there with you today in person, and I very much appreciate this opportunity.

Ms. Patell, I want to start with some questions around the interface between people who have suspicions of seeing fraudulent activity and then the opportunity to have that addressed.

Across your products, do you have a customer service standard time of response when there is an advertisement that's flagged as potentially fraudulent? Does it differ across products? What is that standard?

Jeanette Patell: If I understand you correctly, your question is with regard to the time to assess a user report of a problematic ad or other type of content.

Karim Bardeesy: That's right, and a response and/or resolution time.

Jeanette Patell: As I said earlier, this is something that's really context-dependent. One of the things to keep in mind when you're thinking about turnaround times for decision-making is that having rigid decision-making can essentially lead to over-blocking content or essentially penalizing legitimate actors for the behaviour of bad actors. When I say that it's context-dependent, it's because we do need to apply a rigorous analysis to whether something is policy-violative or not and to understand the behaviour of that account.

What I have been sharing with the committee is that we are invested in doing that rapidly and to being agile to respond as the threat evolves.

Karim Bardeesy: Do you have a customer service standard with respect to when someone can expect to hear back from a person at Google?

Jeanette Patell: As I said, I think what we look at is how we can do this in a way that is effective and responsive and essentially drives to a balanced outcome.

I think that what I'm hearing from you is a desire for some sort of bracketing of time frames, but when we're looking at the evaluation of content and the behaviours that might need to be assessed, having a rigid time frame does not always drive to those outcomes.

Karim Bardeesy: I understand.

I'm speaking more on behalf of those who seek communication back from the company when they have flagged something.

I want to pick up on Mr. Falk's questions about reimbursement.

Again, it's a similar question. Do you have a customer service standard or written policy with respect to the potential for reimbursement when someone has been defrauded through links that might be on the platform?

• (1140)

Jeanette Patell: I think, when we talk about this, I want to keep in mind that there are victims here who are deeply harmed, and the perpetrators of that crime should be held accountable for that. We are doing what we can to litigate, freeze their assets and disrupt the infrastructure behind their operations. We are also doing everything we can to never even take revenue.

We have to, in our minds, understand where we need to focus on the source of this problem. The source of this problem is criminal organizations that should be held accountable as opposed to giving perpetrators a free pass.

Karim Bardeesy: I understand. Thank you for flagging some of the activities that you've done on the [*Technical difficulty—Editor*].

Could you speak to the role of the financial crimes agency that is being proposed here in Canada? What kind of relationship could you see it having with Google Canada or Google product lines that have deep penetration in Canada? How could the standing up of the new agency interface with your effort?

Jeanette Patell: I'll have to think about that.

I think, for example, that this agency should potentially join the Global Signals Exchange so that it can benefit from the ingestion and distillation of billions of signals and be able to collaborate with platforms of all kinds to detect and respond rapidly to scams and bring down these criminal organizations.

I think this is a space where we'd be very open to collaboration. We're happy to continue conversations with the Department of Finance Canada around that.

Karim Bardeesy: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thanks, Mr. Bardeesy.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ste-Marie, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Patell, if fraudsters commit fraud and these ads are published on your platforms, you certainly have some responsibility, in my opinion, and you must take it.

Google's parent company, Alphabet, does not report or publish its profits or revenues by country, while its net profits exceed \$130 billion U.S. globally.

Google's estimated revenues in Canada are \$12 billion Canadian. Your global net profit margin is 30%. Presumably, then, you're making \$4 billion Canadian a year in profit, mostly from the ads you're selling. Moreover, you pay almost no taxes here because you record the profits in tax havens such as Ireland and Bermuda.

Knowing all that and knowing that you help publish the ads of criminal organizations that are causing local residents to lose thousands of dollars, such as the \$30,000 scam reported in La Presse two days ago, do you consider yourself a socially responsible company here in Canada?

[English]

Jeanette Patell: I would just note that I lost the last part of the question.

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Do you consider yourself a good corporate citizen here in Canada?

[English]

Jeanette Patell: Thank you for the opportunity to respond to that. Absolutely, I do. I think the leadership that Google is showing here goes well above and beyond what we see.

First of all, there's our co-founding the Global Signal Exchange, so that we can have real results. We're tackling the source of the problem and using our resources to litigate proactively and bring down and disrupt the infrastructure of sophisticated criminal organizations. We're building products and entire business models that rely on and reinforce a healthy, trusted digital ecosystem, where we are applying layers of protections and strengthening our products to be safe by design.

It's everything I spoke to earlier: billions of devices being protected, billions of problematic attempts by criminals to victimize Canadians being blocked.... We are all in an environment where we are dealing with an incredible challenge. Saying we're going to be able to prevent trespassers from ever accessing systems is a level of perfection that we work every day to achieve. It requires incredible investment, dedication and teams that are not only doing this for our products but are sharing it freely with other platforms around the world so that they can benefit from our investments in this.

Absolutely, I am incredibly proud of this. When you look at the source of this problem, I want it to be very clear that I find it.... We have all lived...we all know someone who has been victimized in this regard. We're here to show up as a partner in this fight and to say we do not want our systems to be abused, we are doing everything in our power to constantly improve the safeguards applied, and we want to work in partnership so that this problem is tackled.

• (1145)

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: My time is up, but I just want to remind you that I started out by saying that, after my assistant reported a fraudulent ad, no mechanism was put in place, he received no acknowledgement of receipt and the ad continued to be published for days.

Thank you very much.

[English]

Jeanette Patell: I'm happy to work with your office on that.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Ste-Marie.

[English]

Mr. Guglielmin has the floor for five minutes.

Michael Guglielmin (Vaughan—Woodbridge, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

Thank you to our witness for being here today.

Google has said Gemini is used to detect and block scam ads in real time. It reads behavioural patterns, account age and campaign patterns. Can you walk us through what that actually looks like in practice? At what point does Gemini actually intervene?

Jeanette Patell: It's a great question that probably requires a subject matter expert. I'd be happy to connect off-line and do a deeper dive with our subject matter experts on this. In sum, this would be continuous analysis running in the background on the types of behavioural cues. For example, I talked about our onboarding process. When we take on a new advertiser and are doing a trust assessment, we have our advertiser verification process. Then, we have something called limited ad serving.

The point here is that scam networks rely on three things. They rely on speed, volume and deception. We've built our systems to be economically unattractive to scammers, so that we are too slow, too limited in reach and apply too much transparency for it to be worth their time.

In the first place, we have the advertiser verification process. Then, we have limited ad reach. That throttles their ability to reach users. A scammer is casting a wide net. They want to reach millions of people in the hopes that a handful might fall for that deception. Then, we apply the transparency rules of your ad centre, being able to see who the advertiser is and where they are located. This is where, on that limited ad serving.... In the background, Gemini will be assessing behavioural patterns to understand if this actor is trustworthy or if there are....

For example—

Michael Guglielmin: I'm going to interrupt here. I want to bring up Gemini, since we're on the subject here.

Recently, you guys launched a lawsuit for the Outsider Enterprise case. For people who don't know, who might be listening at home, a foreign, criminal cyber-network used Gemini to create phishing links and websites. They sent out some 2.5 million fraudulent text messages, made 9,000 websites and were able to scam people.

Is Gemini able to keep pace with that kind of abuse, or do you see a gap emerging among how professional scammers, fraudsters and foreign actors can use tools like Gemini to scam people, whereas you can't use Gemini to protect them at the exact same speed?

Jeanette Patell: It is a constant challenge. We see the power of AI for defenders, and we apply it every day. We see this as kind of a two-sided coin. AI must be used for defence. It is kind of how we're able to tackle the scale and complexity of this challenge and the dynamic nature of it, but yes, obviously, malicious actors are weaponizing. It's so sad that technology that can be used to hopefully cure cancer, to improve diagnoses and all of these incredible societal benefits, is being misused by these actors.

I do think that this is one where you're in a bit of an arms race. Our company is focused on how we strengthen the protections. Going after the actors who abuse our tools is a tactic that is pretty novel in doing that.

• (1150)

Michael Guglielmin: Would you say that you're playing catch-up, though? The people who are using the tools are able to sort of outpace you, and then you're having to play catch-up, just by the way the technology currently works.

Jeanette Patell: I don't know if I would characterize it that way, but I do think it's a constant space of innovation. We have to be very dedicated and diligent about tackling it.

Michael Guglielmin: In this particular case, there are hundreds of thousands of Americans who were affected. Were any Canadians affected by this?

Jeanette Patell: I'm not familiar with that. I can see if that information is available.

Michael Guglielmin: Okay, thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Guglielmin.

Mr. Ma, the floor is yours, sir.

Michael Ma (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, Ms. Patell.

Earlier, you talked about being proactive in educating the public. Can you be specific in terms of what Google's plan is in that? In that regard, how much is Google spending on educating the public?

Jeanette Patell: Thank you for the question.

This is actually a space where we would really welcome working in partnership with members of this committee, and with any member of Parliament, to help support education of their citizens.

I'm going to speak about two or maybe three things.

One is about our work with the Canadian Anti-Scam Coalition to support their efforts to amplify education resources for the Canadian public. We're working on some workshops targeting literacy tools for retirees. We're hoping to roll those out over the course of the second half of this year. Please feel free to reach out.

Also, there's something called Be Scam Ready. The reason I point to it is that it was developed in part through our teams in Toronto. It gamifies the learning journey, and it's also learning by doing.

Ms. Begum was talking about what steps the government can take. One of the things we've observed in public education is that instead of just having a broadcast out—a broad message diffused in hope that people read and understand—have the learning by doing. Be Scam Ready is something that could be put in any of your households. We're happy to share it with you. It equips Canadians and users around the world with some of those critical skills to identify scams when they're happening, and it gives them that moment of pause and reflection, so that scammers who relied on speed and pressure no longer have that tool at their disposal.

This is something for which I don't have a specific dollar figure to share with you, but it is something we invest in every year. We are looking to do more of that in Canada, and we're happy to work with all of you on that.

Michael Ma: The second part of my original question is this. How much is Google spending on this?

Jeanette Patell: I was saying that I don't have a dollar figure available on that.

Michael Ma: Are you able to estimate a percentage of your revenue?

Jeanette Patell: Unfortunately, I can't on the spot, no. It's also pretty dynamic. We look for opportunities. It's not only a spend thing. It's how you build products and tools that can equip the public. It's not just workshops. If you have an Android phone, we now have a tool that will warn users—in real time—that if a phone call displays a suspicious pattern, it might be a scam.

We're doing this in a whole multiplicity of different ways, so the investment really spans quite a number of actions.

Michael Ma: Without a target, then, how do you know you've spent enough in this regard?

Jeanette Patell: I think this is an issue where we always have to do more, so we bring our A-game to this every single day. We're committed to showing up every day and investing in our products, in our partners and in the public. I don't think there's a floor or a ceiling. This is just something where we have to strive to work together to tackle this challenge.

• (1155)

Michael Ma: Okay.

We all know fraudulent advertisers often attempt to purchase visibility through the same advertising systems used by legitimate businesses. How does Google ensure that commercial incentives never override consumer protection considerations in enforcing decisions?

Jeanette Patell: Thank you for that.

I think it goes back to how we look at the digital ecosystem. I don't know if any of you answer phone calls anymore from phone numbers that you don't recognize. There's a whole generation of people who no longer pick up the phone, because trust was broken. Our incentive here, then, is to preserve trust in the digital ecosystem. That's how we look at it. That's why we've built our business model and our enforcement mechanisms so that we are not making profit from this. We are able to block these ads before they're ever seen by users, so that they don't enter our ecosystem.

We try to make it as unattractive as possible for scammers to even come to Google in the first place, and they'll go look elsewhere.

Michael Ma: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Ma.

Colleagues, I'm going to take a couple of moments here to ask a few questions, and then we're going to go quickly to Monsieur Ste-Marie, the CPC and the Liberals for one more round.

Ms. Patell, I want to pick up on something you just said in response to Mr. Ma, as well as to Mr. Falk earlier. I understand you're saying that in most instances—I believe you said 99% of cases—you are blocking fraudulent activity from occurring. Let's put that aside for a moment. When it does occur, as it did, for example, in this instance of the Prime Minister being put forward through a deepfake and somebody falling victim to that.... Did you earn money on that ad?

Jeanette Patell: You're asking about a specific ad, and I'm not really in a position to—

The Chair: Let me then not be specific about that ad. An ad is uploaded onto YouTube. Somebody falls victim to whatever the fraud is. Fast-forward a month and \$30,000 has been lost by the individual by virtue of that fraud. YouTube is made aware. It's proven that this was a fraudulent ad that was used on your platform. YouTube would have been paid for the advertisement.

Do you keep that money? Do you return that money to the individual who was the victim of the fraud? Do you use that money for your legal fees? Do you collect that money? Help us understand what happens there.

Jeanette Patell: Actually, this is a really important question, because I think it speaks to maybe some parallel paths that seem to be conflated here, one that is policy-violative and one that is criminal activity. Our role as a non-state actor—we are not law enforcement—is to assess content, including ads, for whether they are policy-violative. We cannot make a finding on whether they are fraudulent. That is the role of law enforcement.

The Chair: I understand.

Jeanette Patell: We operate at different paces. When we're made aware of an ad that is policy-violating, where it perhaps violates our misrepresentation policy, we can act rapidly to pull that down and terminate the account.

The Chair: Ms. Patell, let me be clear. You and I are talking about two different things. I'll try to be clearer here. You haven't, in this situation, pulled it down. Someone has fallen victim to an ad that YouTube, for whatever reason, has failed to remove from its site. Would you have collected revenue during the period in which that ad was up?

Jeanette Patell: It really depends; I don't have a good answer for you on what the revenue model would have been for a specific ad.

• (1200)

The Chair: I thought your revenue model was that if an ad is up, you make money off it. You said a few moments ago that you don't make money off it until somebody engages. What I'm asking is that once somebody has engaged, and it's proven that the engagement was with a fraudulent ad, would you have collected revenue?

Jeanette Patell: What I'm trying to say is that if it's proven that it was fraudulent, it's something that will, in my experience, come much longer down the road of a criminal case than whether we've been able to take action on something that was policy-violative.

The Chair: I understand. Once it's been proven that it's criminal, what do you do with the money you raised?

Jeanette Patell: You know, I think that is something I would have to come back to you on. Keep in mind that—

The Chair: I'm sorry to interrupt, Ms. Patell. In other words, you can't say unequivocally that YouTube does not keep the money. Just right now, from where you stand, you cannot say unequivocally that YouTube does not keep the money that it might have earned off a fraudulent ad in which someone was victimized.

Jeanette Patell: I'm pretty confident that we're not recognizing revenue from that activity.

The Chair: What makes you so confident?

Jeanette Patell: I think that's something where we would have no incentive to take that money.

The Chair: I understand, but you would have earned the money already on the ad. That's the point I'm making.

We'll come back to this, Ms. Patell. I think you understand where we're going with this.

I have a couple more really quick questions. You mentioned that you have some technology available to you in terms of providing an opportunity for public officials, for example, to remove a deepfake. You talked about "safe by design". The ad that Monsieur Ste-Marie and Ms. Dancho talked about at the beginning purported to be Prime Minister Carney. Is that correct?

Jeanette Patell: That's right.

The Chair: Did YouTube send correspondence to the Prime Minister to verify whether or not that was in fact him in this particular fraud in question?

Jeanette Patell: I can't speak to this particular situation. What I would say is that we—

The Chair: But your “safe by design” policy should have, if I understand it correctly. Is that right?

Jeanette Patell: We've created something called the “likeness ID”. It is open to public figures to enrol. It's not something that we would necessarily proactively ask the Prime Minister to enrol in, but we'd offer the opportunity for any public figure to use the likeness ID feature. I think there's just a sequencing shift here in terms of how that would work. In cases where we have a public figure endorsement scam, and we're made aware of that, our first action, obviously, is to remove that and then to terminate the account.

The Chair: Did you inform the Prime Minister's office in this instance, of this particular scam?

Jeanette Patell: Again, you're asking about a very specific scenario, so—

The Chair: I understand it's a specific scenario. We're talking about a deepfake involving the Prime Minister of Canada, encouraging Canadians to invest fraudulently, using a platform that you own and operate, that led to the defrauding of \$30,000 of an individual. It's a pretty specific, high-profile case.

If I understand correctly, Ms. Patell, what you're saying is that Google and YouTube do not, in the way that your policy is currently designed, believe that it is your responsibility to reach out to the person who is being impersonated, and that is therefore leading to the potential victimization of a Canadian. What you're saying is that the onus is on the public official to first enrol in a program that you offer, and then at that point they would be able to engage with you.

Do I understand that correctly?

Jeanette Patell: No. I'm sorry if that's the impression I left. I'm talking about two different things.

When we have a policy violated.... Let's be clear. I think the Prime Minister's office is very aware of endorsement scams that are under way. That is something where, when they become aware of one, they need to flag it to us. That happens, and we appreciate being able to do a rapid response, but I would say that we are working to block those from ever coming onto our system.

What I'm talking about in terms of the likeness ID is something that's much broader than just ads. It's actually something that could be available through YouTube. It is something that stands on its own as opposed to interacting with a specific piece of content. That's something we would offer enrolment in for public figures, if that's something they would like to access.

• (1205)

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

My final question, returning to one other thing I asked previously, is this: You have said that you're not sure if YouTube or Google has reimbursed somebody who has been the victim of a fraud that occurred on your platform, and you're not sure whether or not

YouTube or Google has collected revenue from an ad that has, after the fact, been determined to be fraudulent. Do I understand that correctly, that you're not sure?

Jeanette Patell: I think there are a lot of mechanics—

The Chair: No, no—

Jeanette Patell: —that are part of that, which means that I'm not able to give you the yes-or-no answer I think you're looking for.

The Chair: That's okay.

Here's my follow-up. Do you think they should?

Jeanette Patell: I think we have to do everything in our power to be—

The Chair: It's not about power, though. To me it's about morality and justice. I'm just asking if you think that YouTube and Google should. Whether you do now or not, and whether you know you do now or not—I can appreciate that you're not sure here today—I'm asking, do you, as Google's representative here in Canada who is here before us on the company's behalf at a parliamentary committee, think you should?

Jeanette Patell: I think that we should be having no business with fraudulent scammers—

The Chair: But clearly you do.

Jeanette Patell: —and that's what we work to do every day.

The Chair: Yes, but clearly you do.

It's just disappointing to me, Ms. Patell. It's a very similar answer to what we heard from Meta when they were here a couple of weeks ago. I suspect I speak on behalf of most members of the committee when I say that we would hope the answer to that would be yes.

I'm going to pass the floor to Monsieur Ste-Marie for a couple of minutes to very quickly ask one more question, and then it will go to the Liberals for one more. Then we'll wrap up.

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

People from Wealthsimple told the committee that other countries have laws requiring platforms such as YouTube to verify the identity of ad buyers when those financial ads promise high returns. They are asked to verify the identity of the advertisers to ensure that they are not fraudsters, and that must be done properly by an institution that is recognized in the country.

Why don't you do that here? It would simplify a lot of things. It would prevent a lot of fraud. Why don't you verify the identity of the purchasers of advertising to make sure they're not criminals before publishing the ad on your platforms?

[English]

Jeanette Patell: In fact, we do that. I think what we're dealing with.... We do that in a number of different ways. We have advertiser verification for onboarding. We also have additional enhanced verification obligations for sensitive, higher-risk sectors, including financial services sectors. For example, we make sure we're checking their licences and elements like that.

On Google, we don't allow most crypto ads, for example, but in the limited areas where we would, like a crypto exchange, we require registration with FINTRAC. These are steps that we endorse and take, and we do them proactively. We don't do these things because we're legally obligated to. As I said, we've been rolling them out across 240 countries.

I would also point out that we need to do this in a way that is a portfolio approach. The reason I say this is that identification documents are one element—they're one way of demonstrating that you are who you say you are—but—

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Thank you for your answer, but, for a financial ad, looking at the driver's licence of a fraudster or an honest person is not enough. You should really check whether the institution is recognized by the authorities here, and therefore whether it is authorized to publish that type of advertising. If an individual tells you to do such and such a thing, it should simply be blocked, and only real institutions that are registered with official authorities should be allowed to advertise.

That's what you should do. It's all very well to say that you look at the driver's licence, but that's not enough. Will you commit to doing more to block fraudulent financial advertising?

• (1210)

[English]

Jeanette Patell: I think what you're talking about is financial services verification. This is an area that we hope to work on with the Government of Canada, because there are some steps that need to be taken in order to enable that, which are specific to Canada and don't apply in other jurisdictions. This is something that we do in Australia, for example. I'm sure you've heard that.

In Canada, there is shared jurisdiction when it comes to financial services. That is a space where we look for the federal government to play a role, because we would need to work together to create what is essentially a mandated registry that is a single registry, is machine-readable, has certain parameters where the registry requires certain identifiers, acts as a clearing house to validate these financial services providers and is then something that our systems can interact with. There are a few steps that need to be taken here in Canada before that's actually available for us, but it's certainly a conversation that we've had with Finance Canada that we look forward to continuing to have. It's a conversation that we welcome.

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Ste-Marie.

[English]

Madam Dancho.

Raquel Dancho: Thank you, Ms. Patell.

Again, we appreciate your answering many of our questions. I think we're all a bit frustrated with some of the answers, but I appreciate the efforts you're putting in here today.

We recognize that you at Google, across many of your platforms, are doing a lot and taking new measures every day to combat this evolving issue. We recognize the hard work that's being put in, but, of course, you also have a financial interest in doing so. It's not necessarily out of benevolence. It's important that people trust Google's platform; therefore, it's important that you combat frauds and scams. Most people in the western world use your services. It's ubiquitous to use Google, Gmail and YouTube. We use them every day. You have billions of users.

What we're trying to determine.... We recognize what you're saying. There's a role for governments to combat the fraud in the first place. There's a role for banks, Interac and payment rails to stop the flow of the money. There's also a role for people to become educated and to stop themselves from clicking on scams. We recognize that it's multi-faceted.

However, to be clear, what we've heard from many tech companies—yourselves included—is that there is not a dedicated percentage of your revenue for education. You do not have a dedicated customer service standard for responding to or removing frauds. You have billions of daily users. You're one of the largest companies to ever exist in history. You have hundreds of billions of dollars of annual revenue.

The sense we're getting from what we've heard today and from other tech companies' testimonies is that you may be doing a lot but that you're not doing enough. There may be a role that we will recommend to government, such as that there be some requirements for tech companies, whether that's a customer service standard, whether that's something like a dedicated amount of your budget that goes to education, or whether you should be held financially accountable for reimbursing people who use your platform and click on something that you've permitted on YouTube that loses them \$31,000. These are questions that we're wrestling with. There are some things that we will discuss and potentially recommend to the government.

Again, as you are one of the largest and most profitable companies to ever exist, it's difficult for us to hear that our constituents are losing tens of thousands of dollars because of things you're allowing on your platform that are misleading them and that look very convincing. It's difficult for us to accept that you're doing everything that you can, given your vast resources. It's a bit disappointing to hear some of the lack of concrete action in terms of reimbursement, customer service standards and dedicated budgets for education.

We appreciate that you've been here today, and I'll allow you to have the last word.

Thank you.

Jeanette Patell: Thank you.

Listen, this is a situation that has human cost. We take it incredibly seriously. With everything we are doing across our products, our partnerships and our public education, our goal is to disrupt the business model of scammers, not to reinvent it. When we look at how incentive structures are created in legislation, we want to look at how we incentivize information sharing across actors. How do we ensure that policies like competition and privacy don't prevent that or penalize that kind of information sharing? We want to incentivize the public awareness. We do want to incentivize standards, like having a basic understanding of the advertisers on your systems, and to do that in a smart way for this AI era.

There are steps that governments can take to create an incentive structure to have industry players held to a high standard while not shifting liability from perpetrators. There are also resources, quite honestly. We are dedicating an incredible amount of time, energy and resources to prevent this type of action. I believe that Google is a leader in this space. I just want to say that we are on the same side in this debate and in this fight. It is a fight. That is the kind of energy and commitment that we bring to it.

• (1215)

Raquel Dancho: Thank you very much for your testimony today.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms. Patell, I appreciate your being here. We're going to move on to a couple of other things. You are welcome to go. We appreciate your being here to share some insight with us. Thank you very much.

Colleagues, I'm going to give the floor to Madam O'Rourke on something quick. Then we have just a couple of quick minutes to wrap up here.

Madam O'Rourke.

Dominique O'Rourke: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd just like to move the motion that was put on notice last Friday, for mid-sized business growth and retention.

Would you like me to read it in its entirety?

The Chair: I don't think it's necessary, Madam O'Rourke.

We're just looking to see if there are any members who wish to speak to this motion, which was put on notice on Friday, June 12.

Madam Clerk, I'm going to need you, because we're going to have a vote here.

Raquel Dancho: May I respond?

The Chair: Madam Dancho, go ahead.

Raquel Dancho: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Madam O'Rourke, I really appreciate this motion very much. I appreciate the thought that went into it. I appreciate that part of it, from my understanding, was inspired by the productivity study earlier this year, which we all worked together on. I feel it is a thoughtful motion that is looking to fill some gaps.

I also appreciate any motion that's looking to review government spending in the way that you've put it and in the way that we've put past motions.

We do support this, and we appreciate that you've brought it forward.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Mr. Ste-Marie, you have the floor.

Gabriel Ste-Marie: This is a very important and interesting topic. I would like to say quickly that it might be a good idea in the future for us to meet as a subcommittee or informally, all the parties together, to get an overview of each parliamentary period. Nonetheless, I fully support this motion.

[*English*]

The Chair: Seeing no further speakers and no opposition, I'm going to consider this motion adopted.

(Motion agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

The Chair: Colleagues, just before we end, I have a couple of things.

First and foremost, I want to thank all of the House administration, our interpreters, our analysts and those who help support the function of committee every week for being here to support us. We know it's not always easy. The same also goes to political staff from all parties. We very much appreciate the dedication that you have to the service of the country. Often, you're doing very difficult work behind the scenes. Although there's not always agreement on how we get to things, we appreciate the work that you do. Thank you.

I have two last things. This committee has been unusually collaborative. Not all committees work this way. I want to take a moment to thank and congratulate members from all parties for the way in which they have collaborated with one another. It's not always easy and does not always get to where an individual may want us to get but, nonetheless, it's in the spirit of trying to advance the interests of the business before us. I want to take the opportunity to thank you for that.

The very final thing is this. It is our wonderful clerk's last day with us here at the industry committee. I am going to offer Raquel, Gabriel and Karim a quick couple of seconds, if they want, to express their gratitude, but I want to express mine. The clerk plays a critical role in the function of Parliament, particularly in regard to committee.

Miriam, you have been gracious, kind, thoughtful and, most importantly, helpful in the work that we do. On behalf of all of us, as the chair of this committee, I want to thank you so much for everything that you have done. I'm going to give Raquel the opportunity to express that as well.

Raquel Dancho: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Madam Clerk, I offer a very heartfelt thank you for your dedication to serving the Canadian public in such a critical role. As fellow Manitobans, we've shared many kind words.

As you reminded me today, for the very first committee that I ever chaired, you were there beside me. I remember feeling quite terrified. You were the port in the storm for me and a guiding hand of wisdom. I greatly appreciate everything that you've done for this committee and in your 35-year career. We are very lucky in Canada that we have exceptional public servants like you. You are certainly among the best. Thank you for your leadership in this country and on this committee, and for teaching us what it really means to serve the public in a professional way, to the highest standard.

Thank you very much.

• (1220)

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Ste-Marie.

[Translation]

Gabriel Ste-Marie: Ms. Burke, it's really been a pleasure working with you. I thank you for everything you've done, and I wish you all the best in the future. It's well deserved.

I've worked with a number of clerks over the years, and as Ms. Dancho said, you are without a doubt one of the most seasoned. What I like about you is that, even when there is a lot of pressure, even when the situation is complex, even when you have to react quickly, you always do so with a smile. You're always very cool. Everything seems so simple even though it's not. That is very reassuring. It has really been a great pleasure working with you. In addition, as a francophone, I have to say that your French has al-

ways been impeccable when we have spoken. I really appreciate that. Thank you for everything and all the best in the future.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Bardeesy, I'm going to give you the last word, for a very quick thank you.

[Translation]

Karim Bardeesy: I just want to pick up on what Mr. Ste-Marie said about your composure, Ms. Burke, and your attitude that everything is under control, even though that's not always the case in our caucuses.

[English]

This year, at this committee, I think we have proceeded, with your help, to have the kind of overall relationship.... We're also led by our fantastic chair, who has helped us have, overall, a very collaborative set of proceedings.

We know that behind the scenes, you keep things under control and going in all kinds of ways. We had so many different studies going at once, and you kept all the plates spinning in a very effective way that helped us do our work very well.

Thank you for your leadership at this committee in the procedural and technical sense, but also in the ways you support us to do our best work.

The Chair: We'll give a round of applause.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Chair: With that, before I adjourn for what I hope will be the final time until September, Miriam, I will turn to you to say whatever you might want to.

The Clerk of the Committee (Miriam Burke): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks to all of you. You have me all emotional.

I had prepared a rebuttal, but it's not necessary, clearly.

I'm very grateful for all of you, the work you do and the commitment you have to bettering Canada. It's been an honour to support you in that work.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Chair: I probably shouldn't be presenting alcohol in a public meeting space, but I'm doing it anyway. On behalf of Raquel, Karim and Gabriel, I want to present you with a bottle of the Speaker's scotch, so that Parliament is never far. We wish you all the best and a wonderful summer.

With that colleagues, that same sentiment goes to all of you.

The meeting is adjourned.

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