

Chairman Hawley, Ranking Member Durbin and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

My name is Sarah Wynn-Williams, and I served as Director of Global Public Policy at Facebook, now Meta, for nearly seven years starting in 2011.

Throughout those seven years, I saw Meta executives repeatedly undermine US national security and betray American values. They did these things in secret to win favor with Beijing and build an \$18 billion dollar business in China.

We are engaged in a high-stakes AI arms race against China. And during my time at Meta, company executives lied about what they were doing with the Chinese Communist Party to employees, shareholders, Congress, and the American public. I sit before this Committee today to set the record straight about these illegal and dangerous activities.

Meta's dishonesty started with a betrayal of core American values. Mark Zuckerberg pledged himself a free speech champion. Yet I witnessed Meta work "hand in glove" with the Chinese Communist Party to construct and test custom-built censorship tools that silenced and censored their critics. When Beijing demanded that Facebook delete the account of a prominent Chinese dissident living on American soil, they did it. And then lied to Congress when asked about the incident in a Senate hearing.

The willingness to censor was not the only troubling thing I witnessed. I watched as executives decided to provide the Chinese Communist Party with access to Meta user data – including that of Americans.

Meta does not dispute these facts. They can't. I have the documents. As recently as this Monday they claimed they do not operate services in China. Another lie.

In fact, they began offering products and services in China as early as 2014. That hasn't stopped. Their own SEC filings from last year show that China is now Meta's second biggest market. Meanwhile, Meta's AI model – Llama – has contributed significantly to Chinese advances in AI technologies like DeepSeek.

Facebook's secret mission to get into China was called "Project Aldrin" and was restricted to need-to-know staff. There was no bridge too far. Meta built a physical pipeline connecting the United States and China. Meta executives ignored warnings that this would provide backdoor access to the Chinese Communist Party, allowing them to intercept the personal data and private messages of American citizens. The only reason China does not currently have access to US user data through this pipeline is because Congress stepped in.

Meta started briefing the Chinese Communist Party as early as 2015. These briefings focused on critical emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence. The explicit goal being to help China outcompete American companies. There's a straight line you can draw from these briefings to the recent revelations that China is developing AI models for military use, relying on Meta's Llama model. Meta's internal documents describe their sales pitch for why China should allow them in the market by quote "help[ing] China increase global influence and promote the China Dream."

The truth about what has gone on in China matters. I filed a shareholder resolution asking Meta's Board to investigate its activity in China. And I filed whistleblower complaints with the SEC and the DOJ.

The measure of how important these truths are is directly proportional to the ferocity of Meta's efforts to censor and intimidate me. I relied on their commitment given in 2018 that they would waive their rights to pursue forced arbitration. Despite that public commitment, they brought a case against me for hundreds of millions of dollars. Now they have a legal gag order that silences me even as Meta and their proxies spread lies about me. This order is so expansive that it prohibits me from speaking with Members of Congress. This gag order was sought by a company whose CEO claims to be a champion of free speech.

The American people deserve to know the truth. Meta has been willing to compromise its values, sacrifice the security of its users, and undermine American interests to build its China business. It's been happening for years, covered up by lies, and continues to this day. I am here at considerable personal risk because you have the power and the authority to hold them accountable

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical matter.