



Feb.1, 2012

Rep. Mary Bono Mack, Chairman  
Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade Subcommittee  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C.

Rep. G.K Butterfield, Ranking Member  
Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade Subcommittee  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C.

**Re: Google Briefing**

Dear Chairman Bono Mack and Ranking Member Butterfield,

I am writing on behalf of Consumer Watchdog to express our concern about the closed-door briefing that your committee will apparently receive from Google Deputy General Counsel Mike Yang and Public Policy Director Pablo Chavez on Thursday.

I commend you for seeking an explanation of the Internet giant's unilateral change in its privacy policy and how it handles user data across its services. As you know, Google has tried to justify the move as giving users a better experience. In fact it is all about leveraging users' data to maximize Google's revenues, while giving consumers no meaningful control of their information. Google collected the information under one set of rules and is now changing the game without giving people an opportunity to opt out.

Your investigation into Google's practices that affect millions of Americans should be public. There is a substantial irony in a secret briefing from a company that claims its mission is to organize the world's information and make it more accessible. Once again Google's executives demonstrate their hypocrisy: they want everyone else's information public, but want to keep information about them behind closed doors.

Allowing Google to give secret briefings does not serve the committee nor the public interest. We urge you to question Mr. Yang and Mr. Chavez in public. If they decline, one can only wonder what Google has to hide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M. Simpson".

John M. Simpson  
Privacy Project Director