

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074
<https://oversight.house.gov>

August 17, 2022

Mr. Sundar Pichai
Alphabet, Inc.
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway
Mountain View, CA 94043

Dear Mr. Pichai:

I write today to inquire about your decision to advertise Google's coverage of abortion procedure and travel expenses rather than the company's paid family leave policy after the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. While I support businesses' efforts to support women through their benefit policies, it is troubling that your company is seemingly pressuring women to take advantage of abortion coverage rather than Google's paid family leave policy.

On June 24, 2022, the day the *Dobbs* decision was released, Google's Chief People Officer said that Google's "US benefits plan and health insurance covers out-of-state medical procedures that are not available where an employee lives and works," and that employees "can apply for relocation without justification."¹ There was no reminder about the paid family leave policies in place or emphasis that the company supported women who choose to carry their pregnancies to term and raise their children.

Women have historically faced discrimination for being pregnant due to the number of days women will be absent from the workforce due to the birth and care of their children. The Pregnancy Discrimination Act forbids discrimination based on pregnancy related to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoffs, training, and benefits.² Though illegal, there are many ways in which companies discourage women from carrying pregnancies to term, such as discouraging taking additional time off, making it impossible to get their shifts covered, or taking women off more prominent projects.³

During this time of historically high 9.1 percent inflation, skyrocketing gas prices, and baby formula shortages, it is imperative that women feel they are supported in their decision to

¹ Mitchell Clark & Zoe Schiffer, *Here's Google's Letter Saying Employees Can Relocate to States with Abortion Rights*, THE VERGE (JUN. 25, 2022).

² *Pregnancy Discrimination*, U.S. EQUAL EMP. OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (last visited Jul. 13, 2022).

³ Robin Shulman, *If You're Pregnant and Working, Know Your Rights*, THE N.Y. TIMES (Apr. 18, 2020).

Mr. Sundar Pichai

August 17, 2022

Page 2

balance their family with their work.⁴ They should not feel coerced into seeking an abortion instead of taking time off to have their child, especially since women are already having fewer children than they want.⁵ In order to better understand your company's decision to emphasize abortion coverage over paid family leave, please provide a staff level briefing no later than August 24, 2022.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Cloud", written over a horizontal line.

Michael Cloud
Ranking Member

Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy

cc: The Honorable Raja Krishnamoorthi, Chairman
Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy

⁴ Scott Horsley, *Inflation hit 9.1% in June*, NAT'L PUB. RADIO (Jul. 13, 2022); CBS Miami Team, *US formula shortage persists and will "take a while to fix"*, CBS NEWS MIAMI (Jul. 21, 2022).

⁵ Lyman Stone, *American Fertility is Falling Short of What Women Want*, THE N.Y. TIMES (Feb. 13, 2018).