

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 3, 2015

Ms. Edith Ramirez
Chairwoman
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Chairwoman Ramirez:

Prior to our reintroduction of the Truth In Advertising Act (H.R. 4341 in the 113th Congress), we formally request that the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) hold a public workshop focused on the advertising practice commonly known as “photoshopping,” and how materially altering the appearance of the human body in ads solely to manipulate and persuade consumers may influence the health of people who view those ads. We are concerned by:

1. The high levels of negative emotional, mental, and physical health effects, particularly among children and adolescents, linked to this practice by an increasing amount of evidence.
2. The reach and saturation of ads using altered images of real humans, creating unrealistic expectations of what people can and should look like, and contributing to significant health care costs borne by consumers, and local, state, and federal governments.
3. The ad industry’s unwillingness, to date, to self-regulate these practices despite the evidence linking altered ads to widespread negative effects on public health.

Given the FTC’s primary strategic goal of protecting consumers by “prevent[ing] fraud, deception, and unfair business practices in the marketplace”, the ubiquitous practice of materially altering the look of real people in advertisements to manipulate and persuade consumers deserves review from the agency. In the modern media, an image is a claim, and if these same distorted claims were made in words rather than with pictures it is likely that FTC action would have already taken place to limit the impact on susceptible populations. With the increasing evidence of a link between unrealistic portrayals of the human body in ads and the negative health effects on viewers of such ads—especially children and adolescents—the FTC has a responsibility to use its authority provided under Sections 5 and 18 of the Federal Trade Commission Act to study this issue and to take appropriate action to protect consumers.

Once again, we formally request that the FTC hold a public workshop on this issue, and bring concerned and involved stakeholders from all points of view together to work towards a consensus solution that allows advertisers fair opportunities to market their products while blunting and reversing a growing health crisis among our nation’s children and young adults.

Sincerely,



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress



Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress



Lois Capps
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



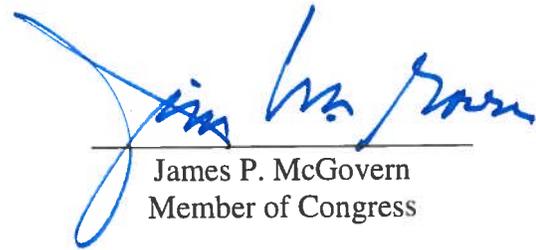
Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



John Lewis
Member of Congress



Doris O. Matsui
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

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February 3, 2015

Ms. Julie Brill
Commissioner
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Commissioner Brill:

Prior to our reintroduction of the Truth In Advertising Act (H.R. 4341 in the 113th Congress), we formally request that the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) hold a public workshop focused on the advertising practice commonly known as “photoshopping,” and how materially altering the appearance of the human body in ads solely to manipulate and persuade consumers may influence the health of people who view those ads. We are concerned by:

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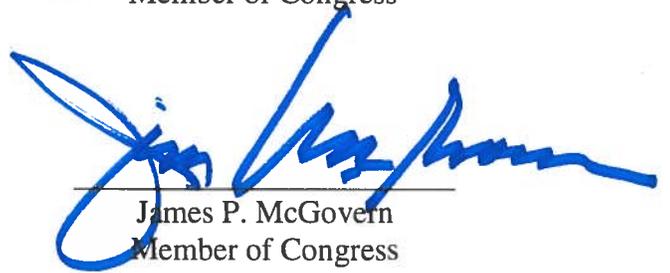
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February 3, 2015

Ms. Maureen K. Ohlhausen
Commissioner
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Commissioner Ohlhausen:

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February 3, 2015

Mr. Joshua D. Wright
Commissioner
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Commissioner Wright:

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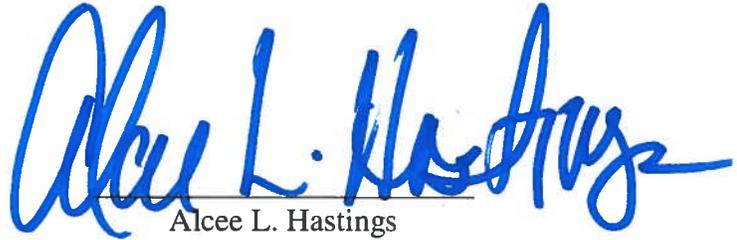
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Member of Congress



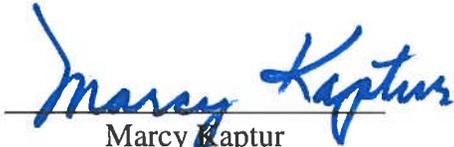
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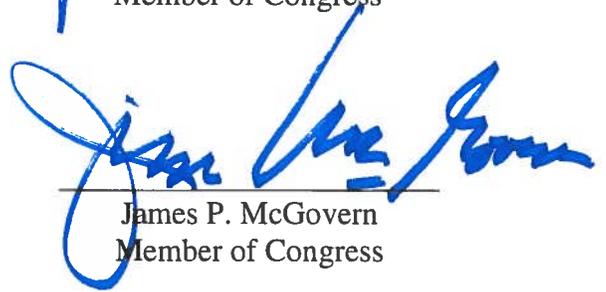
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February 3, 2015

Ms. Terrell Sweeny
Commissioner
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Commissioner Sweeny:

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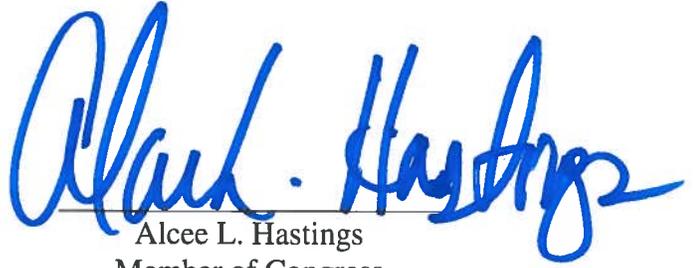
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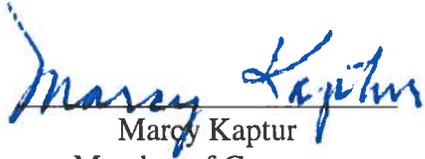
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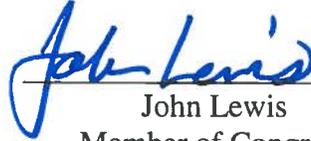
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