

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2309

April 7, 2016

Brendan Iribe, CEO  
Oculus VR  
19800 MacArthur Boulevard, Suite 200  
Irvine, CA 92612

Dear Mr. Iribe,

I am writing to request information on Oculus' virtual reality technology, called Rift, and the company's collection, storage, and sharing of users' personal data. Oculus' creation of an immersive virtual reality experience is an exciting development, but it remains important to understand the extent to which Oculus may be collecting Americans' personal information, including sensitive location data, and sharing that information with third parties. I believe Americans have a fundamental right to privacy, and that right includes an individual's access to information about what data are being collected about them, how the data are being treated, and with whom the data are being shared. As virtual reality technology evolves, I ask that you provide more information on Rift and how Oculus is addressing issues of privacy and security.

In addition to collecting information provided by consumers, Oculus automatically collects information when the consumer uses Oculus' services. Information about consumers' physical movements and dimensions, as well as location data, can be shared with "other companies that are within the family of related companies that Oculus is a part of." The company's privacy statement also indicates that Oculus may share de-identified or aggregated data with others for any purpose. Furthermore, the information Oculus collects can be shared with third parties to directly market products to consumers on or off Oculus' platform. When done appropriately, the collection, storage, and sharing of personal information may enhance consumers' virtual reality experience, but we must ensure that Americans' very sensitive information is protected.

I appreciate that Oculus' privacy policy provides detailed information about what data are collected, when they are collected, and with which companies they are being shared. Consumers must be able to make informed decisions about whether and with whom they share such sensitive information, and they must be assured that, when the information is shared, it will receive the utmost protection. However, questions remain regarding Oculus' data collection of certain types of information and Oculus' relationships with third parties.

In light of these uncertainties, I respectfully request that you respond to the following questions by May 13, 2016:

1. Oculus has stated that it automatically collects users' location information. Is this collection necessary for Oculus to provide services? Are there any other purposes for which Oculus collects this information? Does Oculus share this information with third

parties, including its “related companies”, for any other purpose than the provision of services?

2. Oculus has stated that it automatically collects users’ physical movements and dimensions. Is this collection necessary for Oculus to provide services? Are there any other purposes for which Oculus collects this information? Does Oculus share this information with third parties, including its “related companies”, for any other purpose than the provision of services?
3. Oculus has indicated that it stores communications among Oculus users and any information associated with such communications. Is this retention necessary for the provision of services? And for how long will Oculus retain the data?
4. Given that the data-sharing relationship between Oculus and its related companies is not readily apparent to Oculus’ customers, in your view, which company is responsible for providing information about this relationship to consumers? Which company is responsible for providing security information to consumers?
5. Oculus has indicated that it shares de-identified and aggregate data with others for any purpose. Does Oculus currently sell this information to third parties? Can you specify the purposes for which you’d share or sell such data?
6. Oculus’s privacy statement provides the following with respect to information security: “[N]o data transmission or storage can be guaranteed to be 100% secure. As a result, while we strive to protect the information we maintain, we cannot guarantee or warrant the security of any information you disclose or transmit to our Services and cannot be responsible for the theft, destruction, or inadvertent disclosure of information.” What precautions does Oculus currently have in place to ensure the security of consumers’ data?

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter, and please do not hesitate to contact me or Leslie Hylton on my staff at (202) 224-5641.

Sincerely,



Al Franken  
U.S. Senator