

March 31, 2026

Ambassador Jamieson Greer  
United States Trade Representative  
Executive Office of the President  
600 17th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Greer:

I write to seek answers regarding the Trump Administration's efforts to help Big Tech evade other countries' commonsense regulations—including those that protect Americans and foreigners alike from AI-generated "deepfake" abuse. I have repeatedly sounded the alarm that, while waging his costly global trade wars, President Trump is handing out special favors to advance Big Tech's deregulatory agenda across the globe.<sup>1</sup> A recent episode involving Elon Musk's AI chatbot "Grok," which resulted in the proliferation of nearly 3 million sexually explicit "deepfakes,"<sup>2</sup> illuminated just how dangerous this campaign is. American families have paid an average of \$1,700 each in higher prices thanks to Trump tariffs,<sup>3</sup> all while the U.S. has *lost* manufacturing jobs,<sup>4</sup> but Big Tech companies continue to cash in.

Big Tech companies have long lobbied to repeal commonsense tech regulations—aimed at protecting consumers and breaking up monopolies—at home and abroad.<sup>5</sup> In recent years, they have zeroed in on trade deals as a means of enacting their deregulatory agenda. They have found a willing partner in President Trump: The White House's trade negotiations appear to be focused on securing advantages for the President and his tech billionaire friends, rather than delivering the new manufacturing jobs and balanced trade he promised American families. The 2025 data

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren to Secretary Howard Lutnick, Ambassador Jamieson Greer, and Secretary Scott Bessent, May 28, 2025,

[https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/warren\\_letter\\_to\\_bessent\\_lutnick\\_and\\_greer\\_on\\_big\\_tech\\_favors\\_on\\_digital\\_trade.pdf](https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/warren_letter_to_bessent_lutnick_and_greer_on_big_tech_favors_on_digital_trade.pdf); U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, "Warren Calls Out Big Tech for Misleading on Digital Trade, Highlights Protections for American Data,"

<https://www.warren.senate.gov/newsroom/videos/watch/warren-calls-out-big-tech-for-misleading-on-digital-trade-highlights-protections-for-american-data>.

<sup>2</sup> Center for Countering Digital Hate, "Grok Floods X with Sexualized Images of Women and Children," January 22, 2026, <https://counterhate.com/research/grok-floods-x-with-sexualized-images/>.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee, "American Families Have Paid More Than \$1,700 Each in Tariff Costs Since Trump Entered Office," February 2026, [https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/\\_cache/files/7cc03e65-d40a-465f-9e88-09dd53d3502f/jec-fact-sheet-on-cost-of-tariffs-for-families-update.pdf](https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/7cc03e65-d40a-465f-9e88-09dd53d3502f/jec-fact-sheet-on-cost-of-tariffs-for-families-update.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Rethink Trade, "Donald Trump Promised to Balance U.S. Trade to Rebuild American Manufacturing: That Is Not What Happened in 2025, New Data Show," February 27, 2026, <https://rethinktrade.org/trumptrademanufacturing/>.

<sup>5</sup> Brookings, "Are tariffs Big Tech's new tool against EU regulation?," Tom Wheeler, January 30, 2025, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/are-tariffs-big-techs-new-tool-against-eu-regulation/>.

documents this failure: 88,000 more American manufacturing jobs have disappeared since Trump's second inauguration,<sup>6</sup> and the manufacturing trade deficit is up \$62 billion, or 4 percent.<sup>7</sup>

Throughout his ill-conceived trade war, President Trump has made clear that one of his aims was to bully other countries into repealing their pro-consumer and pro-competition policies—which he baselessly claims “discriminate” against American tech companies.<sup>8</sup> In reality, many of these laws are neutral and simply apply to all companies above certain sizes—most of which happen to be American companies. The policies the Trump Administration has targeted include commonsense, content moderation policies that protect users from harmful material, ensure that users' data cannot be taken advantage of, and empower governments to hold platforms accountable for their failure to keep users safe.<sup>9</sup> These rules protect citizens of these countries and also protect Americans at home. The most recent episode of widespread, unchecked misuse of Grok<sup>10</sup> provided an example of how undermining other countries' laws against Big Tech abuses would endanger Americans.

“Grok” is an AI chatbot developed by Elon Musk. On December 29, 2025, Elon Musk unveiled a new feature allowing X users to use Grok to create and edit images with just one click.<sup>11</sup> This sparked a wave of interest in Grok's image-generation abilities, and users immediately flooded Grok with requests for explicit images.<sup>12</sup> Grok allowed users to generate sexual images of real people, including public figures and private citizens, enabling widespread sexual harassment. Women with large social media followings were early targets,<sup>13</sup> logging on to find that nude images of them had been created and widely circulated without their knowledge or consent. Women victimized by Grok describe the experience as violating, and many feared for their

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<sup>6</sup> Rethink Trade, “Donald Trump Promised to Balance U.S. Trade to Rebuild American Manufacturing: That Is Not What Happened in 2025, New Data Show,” February 27, 2026, <https://rethinktrade.org/trumptrademanufacturing/>.

<sup>7</sup> *Id*; The New York Times, “In 2025, Trade Deficit in Goods Reached Record High,” Ben Casselman and Ana Swanson, February 19, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/02/19/business/economy/imports-tariffs-trade-deficit.html>.

<sup>8</sup> The White House, “Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Issues Directive to Prevent the Unfair Exploitation of American Innovation,” February 21, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/02/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-issues-directive-to-prevent-the-unfair-exploitation-of-american-innovation/>; Brookings, “Donald Trump's digital mercantilism,” Tom Wheeler, October 8, 2025, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/donald-trumps-digital-mercantilism/>.

<sup>9</sup> Public Citizen, “Mapping Big Tech's Global Deregulatory Demands for the Trump Trade Agenda,” January 2026, <https://gtwaction.org/mapping-big-techs-global-deregulatory-demands-for-the-trump-trade-agenda/>.

<sup>10</sup> Office of the Pennsylvania Attorney General, “Attorney General Sunday Co-Leads Letter to xAI Demanding Change to Grok's Unchecked Creation of Nonconsensual Sexual Content,” press release, January 26, 2026, <https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/taking-action/attorney-general-sunday-co-leads-letter-to-xai-demanding-change-to-groks-unchecked-creation-of-nonconsensual-sexual-content/>.

<sup>11</sup> Center for Countering Digital Hate, “Grok Floods X with Sexualized Images of Women and Children,” January 22, 2026, <https://counterhate.com/research/grok-floods-x-with-sexualized-images/>.

<sup>12</sup> The New York Times, “Musk's Chatbot Flooded X With Millions of Sexualized Images in Days, New Estimates Show,” Kate Conger, Dylan Freedman, and Stuart A. Thompson, January 22, 2026, <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/22/technology/grok-x-ai-elon-musk-deepfakes.html>.

<sup>13</sup> The Guardian, “Add blood, forced smile’: how Grok's nudification tool went viral,” Amelia Gentleman and Helena Horton, January 11, 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/news/ng-interactive/2026/jan/11/how-grok-nudification-tool-went-viral-x-elon-musk>.

reputations and careers as these disturbing images continued to circulate.<sup>14</sup> One woman, a musician who was horrified to find photos she had posted online edited with Grok into sexually explicit images, found herself flooded with even more harassment after she tried to post on X about her experience.<sup>15</sup> Within eleven days, users had directed Grok to generate 4.6 million images, 65 percent of which were sexually explicit.<sup>16</sup> Tens of thousands of these sexualized images depicted children.<sup>17</sup> And most disturbingly, almost 30 percent of those images depicting children were still accessible on X over two weeks later, on January 15th, 2026.<sup>18</sup>

Authorities around the world reacted swiftly to these disturbing images, initiating investigations and even outright banning the tool. French and Indian officials quickly announced that they had initiated criminal investigations against Grok for generating images that violated domestic laws.<sup>19</sup> On January 5, 2026, the UK's online regulator made "urgent contact" with X regarding images that violated UK law.<sup>20</sup> By January 8, 2026, this intense public outrage and pressure from foreign governments forced Musk to quash the feature for non-paying users.<sup>21</sup>

The countries that took action against Grok—either by immediately cracking down on the app or taking steps to hold the company accountable after the fact—were able to do so because of their robust domestic online safety laws—the very laws that the Trump Administration and USTR have taken aim at in their "bilateral" trade negotiations:<sup>22</sup>

- The European Union (EU) opened an investigation into Grok under its Digital Services Act (DSA), which the Trump Administration has repeatedly maligned, calling it "overseas extortion"<sup>23</sup> and discriminatory. At the end of last year, the administration even imposed

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<sup>14</sup> 404 Media, "The Most Dejected I've Ever Felt: Harassers Made Nude AI Images of Her, Then Started an OnlyFans," Samantha Cole, February 11, 2026, <https://www.404media.co/grok-nudify-ai-images-impersonation-onlyfans/>.

<sup>15</sup> Reuters, "Elon Musk's Grok AI floods X with sexualized photos of women and minors," A.J. Vicens and Raphael Satter, January 3, 2026, <https://www.reuters.com/legal/litigation/grok-says-safeguard-lapses-led-images-minors-minimal-clothing-x-2026-01-02/>.

<sup>16</sup> Center for Countering Digital Hate, "Grok Floods X with Sexualized Images of Women and Children," January 22, 2026, <https://counterhate.com/research/grok-floods-x-with-sexualized-images/>.

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> CBS News, "Grok chatbot allowed users to create digitally altered photos of minors in 'minimal clothing'," Mary Cunningham, January 2, 2026, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/grok-safeguard-lapses-minors-minimal-clothing-ai/>; Forbes, "Grok Blames 'Lapses In Safeguards' After AI Chatbot Posts Sexual Images Of Children," Ty Roush, January 2, 2026, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tylerroush/2026/01/02/grok-blames-lapses-in-safeguards-after-ai-chatbot-posts-sexual-images-of-children/>.

<sup>20</sup> BBC, "Ofcom asks X about reports its Grok AI makes sexualised images of children," Chris Vallance, Laura Cress, and Liv McMahon, January 5, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5y5w0k99r1o>.

<sup>21</sup> The Guardian, "Grok turns off image generator for most users after outcry over sexualised AI imagery," Helena Horton, Dan Milmo, and Amelia Gentleman, January 9, 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2026/jan/09/grok-image-generator-outcry-sexualised-ai-imagery>.

<sup>22</sup> Center for Strategic and International Studies, "The New Containment Doctrine: How the United States Is Using Trade to Stop Digital Regulation," Duc Minh Nguyet (Moon) Nguyen and Philip Luck, March 9, 2026, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/new-containment-doctrine-how-united-states-using-trade-stop-digital-regulation>.

<sup>23</sup> European Union Institute for Security Studies, "Trump takes aim at 'overseas extortion' of American tech companies: the EU-US rift deepens," Clotilde Bomont, February 27, 2025,

sanctions on the individual who designed the law.<sup>24</sup> You yourself have repeatedly criticized the DSA, characterizing it as “discriminatory and harassing” towards U.S. companies.<sup>25</sup> After X was fined under the DSA last year, you threatened retaliatory tariffs.<sup>26</sup>

- United Kingdom (UK) regulator Office of Communications (“OfCom”) also announced an investigation of Grok under a provision in their Online Safety Act,<sup>27</sup> which requires online platforms to protect users from harmful and/or illegal content.<sup>28</sup> OfCom can fine companies that breach this duty up to 10% of their worldwide revenue<sup>29</sup>—which could amount to billions of dollars—or even shut down the site in the United Kingdom entirely. The U.K. Online Safety Act has been a major target of the Trump Administration. In the spring of 2025, months before the Grok incident, the Trump Administration had paused negotiations with the UK and threatened to blow up the entire deal after reports indicated that the UK would apply this online safety law to AI image-generating services—including Grok.<sup>30</sup>
- Ireland, home of X’s EU headquarters, also launched an investigation under the EU’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), another law that the Trump Administration has repeatedly attacked and characterized as discriminatory towards U.S. companies.<sup>31</sup> The Irish Data Protection Commission (DPC) will determine whether X violated rules concerning the processing and sharing of personal data when it allowed nude and

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<https://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/commentary/trump-takes-aim-overseas-extortion-american-tech-companies-eu-us-rift>.

<sup>24</sup> European Commission, “Commission investigates Grok and X’s recommender systems under the Digital Services Act,” press release, January 25, 2026, [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_26\\_203](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_26_203); European Union Institute for Security Studies, “Trump takes aim at ‘overseas extortion’ of American tech companies: the EU-US rift deepens,” Clotilde Bomont, February 27, 2025,

<https://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/commentary/trump-takes-aim-overseas-extortion-american-tech-companies-eu-us-rift>; Politico, “Macron asks Trump to lift sanctions on former EU tech chief Thierry Breton,” Ben Munster, February 22, 2026, <https://www.politico.eu/article/emmanuel-macron-donald-trump-lift-sanctions-thierry-breton/>.

<sup>25</sup> Post on X by United States Trade Representative, December 16, 2025, <https://x.com/USTradeRep/status/2000990028835508258>.

<sup>26</sup> Politico, “Greer raises possibility of Section 301 probe into EU digital policies,” Ari Hawkins, December 18, 2025, <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2025/12/greer-raises-possibility-of-section-301-probe-into-eu-digital-policies-00697973>.

<sup>27</sup> Ofcom, “Ofcom launches investigation into X over Grok sexualised imagery,” press release, January 12, 2026, <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/illegal-and-harmful-content/ofcom-launches-investigation-into-x-over-grok-sexualised-imagery>.

<sup>28</sup> U.K. Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, “Online Safety Act: explainer,” April 24, 2025, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/online-safety-act-explainer/online-safety-act-explainer>.

<sup>29</sup> Ofcom, “Ofcom launches investigation into X over Grok sexualised imagery,” press release, January 12, 2026, <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/illegal-and-harmful-content/ofcom-launches-investigation-into-x-over-grok-sexualised-imagery>.

<sup>30</sup> The Telegraph, “Trump pulled UK trade deal over AI clash,” Connor Stringer and James Titcomb, December 16, 2025, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/us/politics/2025/12/16/trump-pulled-uk-trade-deal-ai-starmer/>.

<sup>31</sup> Politico, “Why Trump’s administration is going after the GDPR,” Nicholas Vinocur, June 29, 2020, <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/06/29/trump-administration-gdpr-345254>; Le Monde, “Washington pressures EU to ease digital regulations,” Virginie Malingre, November 25, 2025, [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/economy/article/2025/11/25/washington-pressure-the-eu-to-ease-digital-regulations\\_6747789\\_19.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/economy/article/2025/11/25/washington-pressure-the-eu-to-ease-digital-regulations_6747789_19.html).

sexualized images to be generated without the subject's consent.<sup>32</sup> The investigation comes after Irish police received at least 200 reports of Grok-generated images containing child sexual abuse material.<sup>33</sup>

- French authorities called on their domestic online regulator, Arcom, to conduct their own investigation of X under the authority of the DSA.<sup>34</sup> French criminal prosecutors were already conducting a cybercrime investigation into X under suspicions that the platform violated the country's laws prohibiting antisemitism and Holocaust denial, and they have now expanded their inquiry to encompass violations of France's "Security and Regulation of the Digital Space" law (SREN), a domestic French law that supplements the DSA and adds even harsher penalties for sharing sexual deepfakes.<sup>35</sup> Under SREN, the French government can fine violators up to 6% of the company's pre-tax worldwide revenue in the previous year on top of any other fines imposed under the DSA, and tech executives who don't comply can go to prison for up to one year.<sup>36</sup> Big Tech has, unsurprisingly, taken issue with France's SREN. A number of other countries that have been subjected to Big Tech's attempts to curb all regulation—including Malaysia, India, and Indonesia—were also able to take swift action to combat Grok.<sup>37</sup>

President Trump claimed that he launched his ill-conceived tariffs to help American workers. But in reality Big Tech has been the primary beneficiary of Trump's disastrous trade policy, receiving exemptions from many key tariffs affecting the industry while the Trump Administration has used the tariffs to bully other countries into abandoning their regulations countering Big Tech abuses. At best, this is a colossal waste of American families' money—who have footed much of the bill for Trump's tariffs.<sup>38</sup> But these recent events involving Grok reveal how the Trump

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<sup>32</sup> Irish Legal News, "New DPC investigation into Grok deepfake scandal," February 18, 2026, <https://www.irishlegal.com/articles/new-dpc-investigation-into-grok-deepfake-scandal>.

<sup>33</sup> Irish Examiner, "Gardaí investigating 200 reports of child sexual abuse images generated by Grok," Cianan Brennan, January 14, 2026, <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-41775623.html>.

<sup>34</sup> Ministère Française de l'Économie, "Réaction du Gouvernement concernant la génération par Grok, l'IA générative de X, de contenus à caractère sexiste et sexuel," press release, January 2, 2026, <https://presse.economie.gouv.fr/reaction-du-gouvernement-concernant-la-generation-par-grok-lia-generative-de-x-de-contenus-a-caractere-sexiste-et-sexuel/>.

<sup>35</sup> Politico, "France to investigate deepfakes of women stripped naked by Grok," Klara Durand, Oceane Herrero, and Emile Marzolf, January 2, 2026, <https://www.politico.eu/article/france-lawmaker-investigate-deepfakes-women-stripped-naked-grok-x/>; Deleporte Wentz Avocat, "Strengthening Online Safety for Minors: A Deep Dive into the SREN Law," Benedicte Deleporte, October 2024, <https://www.deleporte-wentz-avocat.com/actualite-strengthening-online-safety-for-minors-a-deep-dive-into-the-sren-law>.

<sup>36</sup> Deleporte Wentz Avocat, "Strengthening Online Safety for Minors: A Deep Dive into the SREN Law," Benedicte Deleporte, October 2024, <https://www.deleporte-wentz-avocat.com/actualite-strengthening-online-safety-for-minors-a-deep-dive-into-the-sren-law>.

<sup>37</sup> New Straits Times, "MCMC confirms Grok safety fixes effective after public complaints," Julianna Jalaluddin, January 23, 2026, <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2026/01/1362938/updated-mcmc-confirms-grok-safety-fixes-effective-after-public>; Public Citizen, "Mapping Big Tech's Global Deregulatory Demands for the Trump Trade Agenda," January 2026, <https://gtwaction.org/mapping-big-techs-global-deregulatory-demands-for-the-trump-trade-agenda/>; Tech Policy Press, "Regulators Are Going After Grok and X — Just Not Together," Ramsha Jahangir, January 26, 2026, <https://www.techpolicy.press/regulators-are-going-after-grok-and-x-just-not-together/>.

<sup>38</sup> Congressional Budget Office, "The Budget and Economic Outlook: 2026 to 2036," February 11, 2026, <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/61882>.

Administration is using leverage generated by the tariffs to help Big Tech get away with hurting users—at home and abroad. If the Trump Administration had had its way, foreign governments would have been left without the tools they needed to immediately rein in Grok and limit its harm.

To better understand USTR’s motivations in seeking favors for Big Tech, I/we request that you respond to the following questions by April 14, 2026:

1. Does USTR agree that governments have the right to regulate sexually explicit and otherwise inappropriate material online?
2. Does USTR agree that other sovereign nations have the exclusive right to make domestic laws regarding internet access?
3. Does USTR believe that US companies have the right to distribute sexually explicit material involving minors?
4. Has any official with X or Grok advocated for USTR to oppose or undermine content moderation policies?
  - a. Have USTR officials communicated with Elon Musk or anyone in his employ regarding content moderation policies? If so, please describe those communications.
  - b. Have USTR officials communicated with any Big Tech executives or lobbyists regarding content moderation policies? If so, please describe those communications.
5. Can USTR provide a list of all the content moderation policies it has pushed other countries to abandon?
6. Does USTR believe that content moderation policies countries used to force the end of Grok’s sexually exploitative function are "discriminatory"?
  - a. Does USTR believe that countries who shut down Grok when it began to post illegal content were discriminating against a U.S. company?
7. Do the digital provisions in existing trade agreements cover content moderation policies?
  - a. Anti-monopoly policies?
  - b. Data privacy policies?
  - c. Right to Repair policies?
  - d. AI regulation?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



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Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator