

LLOYD DOGGETT
35TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
CHAIRMAN
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES
COMMITTEE ON BUDGET
JOINT COMMITTEE ON TAXATION



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2307 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4865

DISTRICT OFFICES:
217 W TRAVIS
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78205
(210) 704-1080

300 EAST 8TH STREET, SUITE 763
AUSTIN, TX 78701
(512) 916-5921

December 28, 2020

Eric Yuan
Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Zoom Video Communications
55 Almaden Blvd.
6th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113

Dear Mr. Yuan,

The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed our daily communications, shifting the majority of interactions to video calls, phone calls, and other virtual platforms. Platforms like Zoom have assisted businesses in maintaining productivity, allowed schools to continue educating our children, and aided families and other loved ones in preserving relationships. This social contact is particularly critical as we grapple with the emotional and mental strain of the pandemic and feelings of isolation and loss. I write to encourage Zoom to assure equal access to consumers with disabilities, namely the tens of millions of individuals living with hearing loss.

According to the Hearing Loss Association, an estimated 14.6%, or 48 million, Americans have some degree of hearing loss, including 12.5% of children. For vulnerable older adults, the National Institute on Deafness and other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) estimates that one-third of adults aged 65-74 have hearing loss and that number grows to half of adults over 75. Globally, the World Health Organization estimates that 5% of the population, or 466 million people, live with disabling hearing loss, including 34 million children. These individuals already face some degree of social isolation due to their disability and are now forced to physically distance and communicate through masks or technology. Unfortunately, Zoom is requiring individuals with hearing loss to buy access to their loved ones through the purchase of premium accounts with a closed captioning feature.

Closed captioning should not be treated as an upgrade, since it is a necessary tool for individuals with hearing loss to access communications technologies. To ensure fair and equal treatment of all consumers, regardless of disability, Zoom should immediately make closed captioning available on free accounts. I appreciate your swift attention and response to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lloyd Doggett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lloyd Doggett