

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 29, 2021

Mr. Jeffrey Bezos  
Chief Executive Officer  
Amazon.com, Inc.  
410 Terry Avenue North  
Seattle, WA 98109

Dear Mr. Bezos:

We write concerning Amazon's latest effort to target conservative Americans. On February 8, 2021, in the middle of Black History Month, Amazon removed from its streaming service the critically acclaimed film, *Created Equal: Clarence Thomas in His Own Words*—a documentary about the inspirational life of Justice Clarence Thomas, one of our greatest living Americans and the longest-serving African American in the history of the United States Supreme Court.

*Created Equal* tells the uniquely American story of Clarence Thomas's rise from poverty in rural Georgia to serving on the highest Court in the land, where he has spent three decades as the Constitution's staunchest defender. PBS broadcast the documentary nationally, and more than 92% of its 1600 Amazon reviews gave the documentary five stars. The documentary was significantly outperforming other comparable documentaries, including documentaries on liberal Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Thurgood Marshall. The popular demand for *Created Equal* was so strong that, even after Amazon made the film unavailable to rent or buy through the streaming service, the film's DVD sales hit #1 in the "Documentary" category and #16 in the "Movies & TV" category.

The film's popularity aside, Amazon's decision to pull this documentary came during Black History Month—a time when Amazon was celebrating its own effort to "Amplify Black Voices" with a "collection of titles to honor Black History Month across four weekly themes (Black Love, Black Joy, Black History Makers, and Black Girl Magic)." Amazon's decision to cancel from its streaming service a documentary that celebrates the longest-serving and highest-ranking African American public servant in America suggests that what Amazon actually seeks to do is "Amplify *Liberal* Black Voices," while silencing any who disagree—including and especially the great Justice Clarence Thomas, a genuine "Black History Maker."

Elsewhere in Amazon Prime's movie descriptions, Amazon celebrates the FBI's most wanted terrorist Joanne Chesimard, who murdered a state trooper in cold blood, as a "fantastic feminine freedom fighter" and hails the Weather Underground—a literal terrorist group—as "radical politics at its best[.]" Both films remain available for streaming today.

These decisions suggest that Amazon removes documentaries that feature conservatives while keeping documentaries that celebrate criminals and terrorists. And despite repeated inquiries by media outlets, the filmmakers, and would-be viewers, Amazon appears to have made no effort to explain otherwise.

As members of the U.S. Senate, we have jurisdiction over issues relating to antitrust, technology, the First Amendment, and censorship. We therefore request answers to the following questions:

- Why did Amazon remove *Created Equal: Clarence Thomas in His Own Words* from its video streaming service?
- When was the decision made to remove *Created Equal: Clarence Thomas in His Own Words* from the video streaming service?
- Who made the decision to remove *Created Equal: Clarence Thomas in His Own Words* from the Amazon video streaming service?

Please provide your written response as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 PM on May 12, 2021. Please also arrange for a staff briefing on this matter by contacting Matt Downer at (202) 224-2353. Thank you for your attention to this concerning matter.

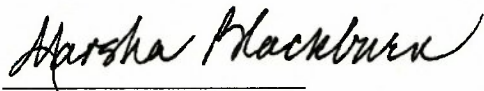
Sincerely,



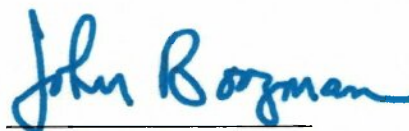
Tom Cotton  
United States Senator



Mitch McConnell  
United States Senator



Marsha Blackburn  
United States Senator



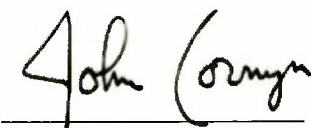
John Boozman  
United States Senator



Mike Braun  
United States Senator



Bill Cassidy, M.D.  
United States Senator



John Cornyn  
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer  
United States Senator



Ted Cruz  
United States Senator



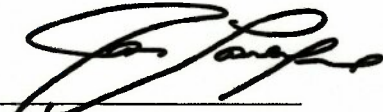
Steve Daines  
United States Senator



Chuck Grassley  
United States Senator




James M. Inhofe  
United States Senator



James Lankford  
United States Senator



Michael S. Lee  
United States Senator



Roger Marshall, M.D.  
United States Senator



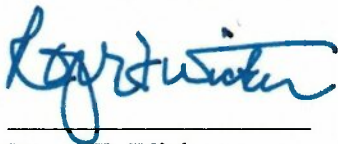
Rick Scott  
United States Senator



John Thune  
United States Senator



Thom Tillis  
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker  
United States Senator