

July 15, 2021

Mark Zuckerberg  
Chief Executive Officer  
Facebook, Inc.  
1 Hacker Way  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Dear Mr. Zuckerberg,

I write with grave concern about the latest evidence that your company is coordinating with the federal government to suppress free speech in the United States of America.

Earlier today, the White House Press Secretary told reporters that the Biden Administration is in “regular touch with the social media platforms” about misinformation and disinformation related to COVID-19, and that it is “flagging problematic posts for Facebook.” This casual admission of collusion—between the state and corporations that have monopolized the flow of information and therefore dictate the terms of service for the public square—is shocking. The First Amendment is sacrosanct, and it is unconscionable that the federal government has evidently enlisted private actors to police speech in ways that it is unable.

This alarming revelation of a public-private partnership to censor the speech of the American people comes just hours after the Surgeon General of the United States, the federal government’s leading spokesperson on matters of public health, published an advisory warning to the American public about the “urgent threat” of health misinformation and disinformation related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The advisory instructs technology platforms on how they can limit the spread of disinformation on its platforms, including hiring more employees to “strengthen the monitoring of misinformation” and to “impose clear consequences for accounts that repeatedly violate platform policies.”

These new admissions and directives by federal officials raise further questions as to whether social media platforms like Facebook have functionally become arms of the federal government. Please respond to the following request for information by July 22, 2021:

1. Please provide a full accounting of social media posts and content that the Biden Administration has flagged to employees of Facebook.

2. Please provide a full accounting of what social media posts and content the Biden Administration has asked Facebook to remove from its platform.
3. Please provide a full accounting of what social media posts and content that Facebook has removed from its platform at the behest of the Biden Administration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Hawley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Josh Hawley  
United States Senator