

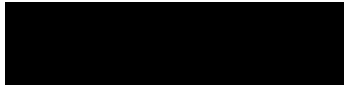


One Hundred Seventeenth Congress

Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol

January 13, 2022

Mr. Parag Agrawal
Chief Executive Officer
Twitter, Inc.



Dear Mr. Agrawal:

Pursuant to the authorities set forth in House Resolution 503 and the rules of the House of Representatives, the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol (“Select Committee”) hereby transmits a subpoena that compels Twitter to produce the documents set forth in the accompanying schedule by January 27, 2022.

The Select Committee is investigating the facts, circumstances, and causes of the January 6th attack and issues relating to the peaceful transfer of power, in order to identify and evaluate lessons learned and to recommend to the House and its relevant committees corrective laws, policies, procedures, rules, or regulations. The inquiry includes examination of how various individuals and entities communicated and coordinated their activities leading up to the events of January 6, 2021, as well as the influencing factors that fomented such an attack on American representative democracy while engaged in a constitutional process.

Among other areas of investigation, the Select Committee has been investigating the use of social media products to organize the attack, whether social media products contribute to radicalization and/or the spread of misinformation or disinformation, and what these companies know about their use in the attack itself or the spread of extremism that enabled the attack.¹

Twitter’s former CEO Jack Dorsey acknowledged last year that Twitter bore some responsibility for the violence that occurred on January 6th.² Indeed, Twitter subscribers reportedly used the platform for communications regarding the planning and execution of the assault on the United States Capitol,³ and Twitter was reportedly warned about potential violence being planned

¹ Letter from Chairman Bennie G. Thompson to Jack Dorsey (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://democrats-january6th.house.gov/sites/democrats.january6th.house.gov/files/2021-08-26.BGT%20to%20Twitter.pdf>.

² See Kate Conger, *Jack Dorsey Says Twitter Played a Role in U.S. Capitol Riot*, N.Y. Times (Mar. 25, 2021), available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/business/jack-dorsey-twitter-capitol-riot.html>.

³ Atlantic Council’s DFRLab, *#StopTheSteal: Timeline of Social Media and Extremist Activities Leading to 1/6 Insurrection*, (Feb. 10, 2021), Just Security, available at <https://www.justsecurity.org/74622/stopthesteal-timeline-of-social-media-and-extremist-activities-leading-to-1-6-insurrection>; Dan Barry & Sheera Frenkel, *‘Be There. Will be Wild!’: Trump All but Circled the Date*, N.Y. Times (July 27, 2021), available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/06/us/politics/capitol-mob-trump-supporters.html>.

on the site in advance of January 6th.⁴ Further, high-profile Twitter subscribers used the platform for communications amplifying allegations of election fraud even after the December 14 certification of election results by the states, and theories of election fraud in the weeks leading up to the January 6th attack following the December 14 certification of election results by the states. For example, President Donald Trump on December 19 tweeted “Statistically impossible to have lost the 2020 Election,” and urged his followers to come to Washington to engage in a “wild” protest on January 6, 2021.

Unfortunately, the Select Committee believes Twitter has failed to disclose critical information that is responsive to its August 26, 2021 document request.⁵ For example, Twitter has not produced important documents relating to warnings it received regarding the use of the platform to plan or incite violence on January 6th. In addition, Twitter has failed to fully comply or even commit to a timeline for complying with the Select Committee’s request for internal company analyses of misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation relating to the 2020 election, efforts to challenge or overturn the election, and the use of Twitter by domestic violent extremists or foreign malign influences to affect the 2020 election. Finally, Twitter has failed to produce any documents that fully explain either its decision to suspend President Trump’s account on January 8, 2021, or any other decisions the company made regarding President Trump’s account relating to the events of January 6th.⁶

After over four months of good-faith negotiations on the part of the Select Committee, it has become clear that Twitter is unwilling to commit to voluntarily and expeditiously complying with the Select Committee’s requests. Accordingly, the Select Committee is transmitting this subpoena for priority documents in the scope of the August 26, 2021 request. A copy of the document production definitions and instructions is attached. Please contact staff for the Select Committee at 202-225-7800 to arrange for the production of documents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bennie G. Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bennie" being more prominent.

Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman

⁴ See, e.g., Danica Kirka, *Prince Harry Says he Warned Twitter CEO of Jan. 6 Capitol Riots: 'I Haven't Heard From Him Since,'* Associated Press (Nov. 10, 2021), available at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/entertainment/celebrities/2021/11/10/prince-harry-says-he-warned-twitter-ceo-before-jan-6-capitol-riots/6367058001>.

⁵ Letter from Chairman Bennie Thompson to Jack Dorsey (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://january6th.house.gov/sites/democrats.january6th.house.gov/files/2021-08-26.BGT%20to%20Twitter.pdf>.

⁶ See, e.g., Jefferson Graham, *Are Trump's Days of Special Treatment on Twitter Numbered? Post Presidency, He'll Be Just Another User*, USA Today (Nov. 17, 2020), available at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2020/11/06/twitter-wont-give-trump-special-treatment-post-presidency/6181794002>.



One Hundred Seventeenth Congress

Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol

January 13, 2022

Mr. Steven Huffman
Chief Executive Officer
Reddit



Dear Mr. Huffman:

Pursuant to the authorities set forth in House Resolution 503 and the rules of the House of Representatives, the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol (“Select Committee”) hereby transmits a subpoena that compels Reddit to produce the documents set forth in the accompanying schedule by January 27, 2022.

The Select Committee is investigating the facts, circumstances, and causes of the January 6th attack and issues relating to the peaceful transfer of power, in order to identify and evaluate lessons learned and to recommend to the House and its relevant committees corrective laws, policies, procedures, rules, or regulations. The inquiry includes examination of how various individuals and entities coordinated their activities leading up to the events of January 6, 2021, as well as the influencing factors that fomented such an attack on American representative democracy while engaged in a constitutional process.

Among other areas of investigation, the Select Committee has been investigating the use of social media products to organize the attack, whether social media products contribute to radicalization and/or the spread of misinformation or disinformation, and what these companies know about their use in the attack itself or the spread of extremism that enabled the attack.¹

Reddit was the host of “r/The_Donald,” a ‘subreddit’ community that grew significantly before migrating off the site to the website TheDonald.win in mid-2020, and which ultimately was a platform on which a significant amount of online discussion and planning by users occurred related to the January 6th attack on the United States Capitol and the constitutional actions of Congress.² After years of growth on the site, Reddit decided to restrict some features of their site

¹ Letter from Chairman Bennie G. Thompson to Steve Huffman (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://democrats-january6th.house.gov/sites/democrats.january6th.house.gov/files/2021-08-26.BGT%20to%20Reddit.pdf>.

² See, “TRUMP TWEET. DADDY SAYS BE IN DC ON JAN. 6TH,” TheDonald.win, archived at <https://web.archive.org/web/20210111094158/https://thedonald.win/p/11R4q2aptJ/trump-tweet-daddy-says-be-in-dc-/c/> (including comments reading, “I read that as armed. If everyone commits to constitutional carry, then how can

for the “r/The_Donald” community in 2019 and early 2020, and—ultimately—shut down the subreddit on June 29, 2020.³ On January 8, 2021, Reddit shut down the largest remaining subreddit dedicated to President Trump (“r/donaldtrump”), apparently for breaking its rules related to violent content.⁴

In addition to other topics, the Select Committee is investigating whether and how the social media ecosystem enabled or exacerbated the attack on the U.S. Capitol, and how it developed, evolved, and functioned. This includes what various social media entities knew about the extent to which their platforms facilitated misinformation and disinformation about the 2020 election or served as a medium for planning or perpetuating the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6th; what steps they could have taken or did take to limit the use of their platforms for those purposes; and what impact any such actions did or did not have.

The Select Committee sought information related to these topics through my letter of August 26, 2021⁵ and through subsequent engagements with Reddit. However, to date Reddit still has not committed to a thorough review of its records for documents relevant to the Select Committee’s investigation and has refused to produce internal documents to support its conclusory public statements that Reddit played no role in January 6th. Accordingly, the Select Committee is transmitting this subpoena requiring documents regarding these and other matters that are within the scope of the Select Committee’s inquiry.

A copy of the document production definitions and instructions is attached. Please contact staff for the Select Committee at 202-225-7800 to arrange for the production of documents.

Sincerely,



Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman

they stop us?”; “Cops don't have ‘standing’ if they are laying on the ground in a pool of their own blood.”; and “Those of us who can't go can maybe donate \$100 to stopthesteal.us ... help pay for someone's hotel room or something...?”); *see also* Craig Timberg, *Gallows or Guillotines? The Chilling Debate on TheDonald.win Before the Capitol Siege*, Washington Post, (April 15, 2021), available at

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/04/15/thedonald-capitol-attack-advance-democracy>.

³ Robert Peck, *The Hate-Fueled Rise of r/The_Donald—and Its Epic Takedown*, Wired (Aug. 3, 2020), available at <https://www.wired.com/story/the-hate-fueled-rise-of-rthe-donald-and-its-epic-takedown>.

⁴ Sam Machkovech, *Reddit’s largest remaining Trump community banned for ‘inciting violence’ [Updated]*, (Jan. 8, 2021), ArsTechnica, available at <https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2021/01/reddits-largest-remaining-trump-community-banned-for-inciting-violence>.

⁵ Letter from Chairman Bennie Thompson to Steve Huffman (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://january6th.house.gov/sites/democrats.january6th.house.gov/files/2021-08-26.BGT%20to%20Reddit.pdf>.

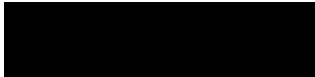


One Hundred Seventeenth Congress

Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol

January 13, 2022

Mr. Mark Zuckerberg
Chief Executive Officer
Meta Platforms, Inc.



Dear Mr. Zuckerberg:

Pursuant to the authorities set forth in House Resolution 503 and the rules of the House of Representatives, the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol (“Select Committee”) hereby transmits a subpoena that compels Meta Platforms, Inc.¹ to produce the documents set forth in the accompanying schedule by January 27, 2022.

The Select Committee is investigating the facts, circumstances, and causes of the January 6th attack and issues relating to the peaceful transfer of power, in order to identify and evaluate lessons learned and to recommend to the House and its relevant committees corrective laws, policies, procedures, rules, or regulations. The inquiry includes examination of how various individuals and entities communicated and coordinated their activities leading up to the events of January 6, 2021, as well as the influencing factors that fomented such an attack on American representative democracy while engaged in a constitutional process.

Among other areas of investigation, the Select Committee has been investigating the use of social media products to organize the attack, whether social media products contribute to radicalization and/or the spread of misinformation or disinformation, and what these companies know about their use in the attack itself, or the spread of extremism that enabled the attack.²

Meta is the largest social media company in the world.³ According to public reports, people used Meta’s platforms in the months and days before January 6, 2021, to share messages of hate, violence, and incitement, to spread misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories

¹ This letter refers to Meta Platforms, Inc, but Meta and Facebook should be construed as interchangeable for the purposes of the Select Committee’s requests; Meta is meant to encompass the current corporate entity, its subsidiaries, and predecessors.

² Letter from Chairman Bennie G. Thompson to Mark Zuckerberg (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://democrats-january6th.house.gov/sites/democrats.january6th.house.gov/files/2021-08-26.BGT%20to%20Facebook.pdf>.

³ See Sarah Perez, *TikTok to Rank as the Third Largest Social Network, 2022 Forecast Notes*, TechCrunch (Dec. 20, 2021), available at <https://techcrunch.com/2021/12/20/tiktok-to-rank-as-the-third-largest-social-network-2022-forecast-notes>.

around the election, and to coordinate or attempt to coordinate the Stop the Steal movement.⁴ Recent public statements from former Facebook employee and whistleblower Frances Haugen and public reports about documents she disclosed have added to the public's understanding of Facebook's research, structure, incentives, actions, successes, and failures.⁵

The Select Committee believes Meta has information critical to its investigation. To take but one example, according to public accounts, following the November 2020 election and prior to the January 6th attack on the U.S. Capitol, Facebook disbanded the Civic Integrity team that had focused on risks to election including misinformation,⁶ and reduced the application of tools used to restrain the spread of violent content.⁷ However, despite repeated and specific requests for documents related to these matters, the Select Committee still has not received these materials.

Additionally, Meta has failed to provide critical internal and external analyses conducted by the company regarding misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation relating to the 2020 election, efforts to challenge or overturn the election, and the use of Meta by domestic violent extremists to affect the 2020 election. The Select Committee expressly requested that information in an August 26, 2021 letter⁸ and despite repeated and specific follow-up requests on September 28, 2021, and October 29, 2021, Meta has declined to commit to a deadline for producing or even identifying these materials.

⁴ Ryan Mac & Craig Silverman, *Facebook Has A Metric for "Violence and Incitement Trends." It's Rising*, BuzzFeed (Nov. 5, 2020), available at <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/ryanmac/facebook-internal-metric-violence-incitement-rising-vote>; Craig Silverman, Ryan Mac, & Jane Lytvynenko, *Facebook Knows It Was Used To Help Incite The Capitol Insurrection*, BuzzFeed (April 22, 2021), available at <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/craigsilverman/facebook-failed-stop-the-steal-insurrection>.

⁵ Frances Haugen Testimony, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, and Data Security Hearing, *Protecting Kids Online: Testimony from a Facebook Whistleblower*, (Oct. 5, 2021) (discussing how aggressive Facebook chose to make the algorithms it uses to decide which content to display); Jeff Horwitz, *Facebook Says Its Rules Apply to All. Company Documents Reveal a Secret Elite That's Exempt.*, Wall St. Journal (Sept. 13, 2021), available at https://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-files-xcheck-zuckerberg-elite-rules-11631541353?mod=article_inline; Keach Hagey & Jeff Horwitz, *Facebook Tried to Make Its Platform a Healthier Place. It Got Angrier Instead.*, Wall St. Journal (Sept. 15, 2021), available at <https://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-algorithm-change-zuckerberg-11631654215>; Craig Timberg, Elizabeth Dowskin & Reed Albergotti, *Inside Facebook, Jan. 6 Violence Fueled Anger, Regret Over Missed Warning Signs*, Washington Post (Oct. 22, 2021), available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/10/22/jan-6-capitol-riot-facebook/>; Keach Hagey & Jeff Horwitz, *Facebook's Internal Chat Boards Show Politics Often at Center of Decision Making*, Wall St. Journal (Oct. 24, 2021), available at https://www.wsj.com/articles/facebook-politics-decision-making-documents-11635100195?mod=article_inline; Ryan Mac & Sheera Frenkel, *Internal Alarm, Public Shrugs: Facebook's Employees Dissect Its Election Role*, N.Y. Times (Oct. 25, 2021), available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/22/technology/facebook-election-misinformation.html>.

⁶ Alex Heath, *Facebook Splits Up Unit At Center of Contested Election Decisions*, The Information (Dec. 3, 2020), available at <https://www.theinformation.com/articles/facebook-splits-up-unit-at-center-of-contested-election-decisions>.

⁷ *Facebook Missed Weeks of Warning Signs Over Capitol Attack, Documents Suggest*, The Guardian (Oct. 23, 2021), available at <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2021/oct/23/facebook-whistleblower-january-6-capitol-attack>.

⁸ Letter from Chairman Bennie Thompson to Mark Zuckerberg (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://january6th.house.gov/sites/democrats.january6th.house.gov/files/2021-08-26.BGT%20to%20Facebook.pdf>.

Mr. Zuckerberg

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In light of these and other significant gaps in Meta's response to the Select Committee, the Select Committee is transmitting this subpoena requiring documents within the scope of the Select Committee's inquiry.

A copy of the document production definitions and instructions are attached. Please contact staff for the Select Committee at 202-225-7800 to arrange for the production of documents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Bennie G. Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bennie" being more prominent and the last name "Thompson" following in a similar style.

Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman

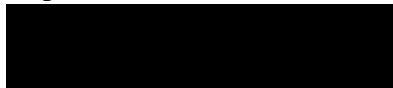


One Hundred Seventeenth Congress

Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol

January 13, 2022

Mr. Sundar Pichai
Chief Executive Officer
Google, LLC
Alphabet, Inc.



Dear Mr. Pichai:

Pursuant to the authorities set forth in House Resolution 503 and the rules of the House of Representatives, the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol (“Select Committee”) hereby transmits a subpoena that compels Alphabet, Inc. to produce the documents set forth in the accompanying schedule by January 27, 2022.

The Select Committee is investigating the facts, circumstances, and causes of the January 6th attack and issues relating to the peaceful transfer of power, in order to identify and evaluate lessons learned and to recommend to the House and its relevant committees corrective laws, policies, procedures, rules, or regulations. The inquiry includes examination of how various individuals and entities communicated and coordinated their activities leading up to the events of January 6, 2021, as well as the influencing factors that fomented such an attack on American representative democracy while engaged in a constitutional process.

Among other areas of investigation, the Select Committee has been investigating the use of social media products to organize the attack, whether social media products contribute to radicalization and/or the spread of misinformation or disinformation, and what these companies know about their use in the attack itself or the spread of extremism that enabled the attack.¹

YouTube was a platform for significant communications by its users that were relevant to the planning and execution of January 6th attack on the United States Capitol. For example, Steve Bannon live-streamed his podcast on YouTube in the days before and after January 6, 2021,² and

¹ Letter from Chairman Bennie Thompson to Sundar Pichai (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://january6th.house.gov/sites/democrats.january6th.house.gov/files/2021-08-26.BGT%20to%20Google.pdf>; Letter from Chairman Bennie Thompson to Susan Wojcicki (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://january6th.house.gov/sites/democrats.january6th.house.gov/files/2021-08-26.BGT%20to%20YouTube.pdf>.

² Rashid Umar Abbasi *Steve Bannon’s Podcast Shuttered by YouTube Over False 2020 Election Claims*, New York Post (Jan. 8, 2021), available at <https://nypost.com/2021/01/08/youtube-axes-steve-bannons-podcast-over-false-2020-election-claims>; Lindsey Ellefson, *Steve Bannon’s ‘War Room’ Channel Pulled From YouTube*, The Wrap (Jan. 8, 2021), available at <https://www.thewrap.com/bannon-youtube-war-room>.

live-streams of the attack appeared on YouTube as it was taking place.³ To this day, YouTube is a platform on which user video spread misinformation about the election.⁴ In addition, YouTube took down a video that President Trump posted during the January 6, 2021 attack,⁵ and decided to suspend his account on January 12, 2021.⁶

The Select Committee believes Alphabet has significant undisclosed information that is critical to its investigation, concerning how Alphabet developed, implemented, and reviewed its content moderation, algorithmic promotion, demonetization, and other policies that may have affected the January 6, 2021 events. For example, Alphabet has not produced any documents that fully explain non-public moderation discussions and policies that led to President Trump's suspension or that explain whether or why the platform did or did not act regarding President Trump's account in advance of January 6th.

Additionally, Alphabet has not produced documents relating to YouTube's policy decisions that may have had an impact on the planning, coordinating, and execution of January 6th Attack on the U.S. Capitol. For instance, on December 9, 2021,⁷ YouTube announced a new election misinformation content moderation policy. While this policy appears to have taken effect immediately, it provided that accounts did not accrue strikes during a "grace period" that was to last until Inauguration Day (January 20, 2021).⁸ In the immediate aftermath of January 6, 2021, YouTube announced that it was ending this grace period early, and started permitting accounts to accrue strikes (which "temporarily suspended posting or live streaming," and which resulted in removal if sufficient strikes were accrued in a 90-day period).⁹

The Select Committee initially sought information related to these topics through my letters of August 26, 2021,¹⁰ and through subsequent engagements with Alphabet. However, Alphabet

³ Julia Alexander, Jacob Kastrenakes, & Bijan Stephen, *How Facebook, Twitch, and YouTube are Handling Live Streams of the Capitol Mob Attack*, The Verge (Jan. 6, 2021), available at <https://www.theverge.com/2021/1/6/22217421/capitol-building-trump-mob-protest-live-stream-youtube-twitch-facebook>.

⁴ See, e.g., One America News Network Channel, "Christina Bobb: Trump Won. MSM Hopes You Don't Believe Your Eyes" (Nov. 4, 2020) YouTube, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4c5dYDD9xw> (last accessed Jan. 5, 2022).

⁵ Devin Coldewey & Taylor Hatmaker, *Facebook and YouTube Remove Trump Video Calling Extremists 'Special'*, Tech Crunch (Jan. 6, 2021), available at <https://techcrunch.com/2021/01/06/facebook-and-youtube-remove-trump-video-calling-extremists-special/>; Ina Fried, Ashley Gold, *YouTube Takes Down Trump Video, Bans New Uploads For a Week*, Axios (Jan. 13, 2021), available at <https://www.axios.com/youtube-takes-down-trump-video-bans-new-uploads-for-a-week-f8f6caca-801f-4d2a-917d-fafb6401d9cd.html>.

⁶ Mike Snider, *YouTube Ban: Google Extends Suspension of Former President Trump's Channel*, USA Today (Jan. 26, 2021), available at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/news/2021/01/26/youtube-ban-former-president-trumps-channel-remain-suspended/4265336001/>.

⁷ The YouTube Team, *Supporting the 2020 U.S. Election*, YouTube Official Blog (Dec. 9, 2020), available at <https://blog.youtube/news-and-events/supporting-the-2020-us-election/>.

⁸ @YouTubeInsider, Twitter (Jan. 7, 2021, 12:19 PM), available at <https://twitter.com/YouTubeInsider/status/1347231471212371970>.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Letter from Chairman Bennie Thompson to Sundar Pichai (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://january6th.house.gov/sites/democrats.january6th.house.gov/files/2021-08-26.BGT%20to%20Google.pdf>; Letter from Chairman Bennie Thompson to Susan Wojcicki (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://january6th.house.gov/sites/democrats.january6th.house.gov/files/2021-08-26.BGT%20to%20YouTube.pdf>.

Mr. Sundar Pichai

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has not demonstrated a commitment to voluntarily and expeditiously producing the information critical to the Select Committee's investigation. Accordingly, the Select Committee is transmitting this subpoena for priority documents in the scope of the August 26, 2021 request.

A copy of the rules governing document production definitions and instructions is attached. Please contact staff for the Select Committee at 202-225-7800 to arrange for the production of documents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Bennie G. Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bennie" and last name "Thompson" clearly legible.

Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman