

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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October 15, 2020

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney
Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight and Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Maloney:

We respectfully request an emergency hearing on Big Tech's repeated efforts to interfere in the 2020 election. Big Tech's silencing of conservative viewpoints and censorship of news undermines the integrity of the 2020 election and harms Americans' First Amendment right to freedom of speech.

Most recently, Facebook and Twitter censored a negative news article about Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden.¹ According to the New York Post, emails show that in 2015, Hunter Biden introduced then-Vice President Joe Biden to a Ukrainian energy executive from Burisma.² During this time, Hunter Biden served on Burisma's board of directors.³ Joe Biden has repeatedly denied ever speaking to Hunter Biden about his international business dealings.⁴ In addition to a now infamous video showing Joe Biden bragging about interfering in Ukraine affairs,⁵ the New York Post article raises more questions about whether Joe Biden lied about using his position as Vice President to help his son's Ukrainian business dealings.

Shortly after the story was posted on Facebook, the company decided to "reduce its distribution" in an apparent attempt to limit access to the story.⁶ Just as concerning, Facebook reportedly refused to answer basic questions about its decision.⁷ Twitter also censored the article and warned users that it is "potentially spammy or unsafe." Facebook and Twitter have done

¹ Paul Conner, *Facebook reducing distribution of Hunter Biden story in New York Post*, FOX BUSINESS, Oct. 14, 2020, available at <https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/facebook-reducing-distribution-of-hunter-biden-story-in-new-york-post>

² Brooke Singman, *Hunter Biden emails under investigation by Senate Homeland Security Committee after hard drive report emerges*, FOX NEWS, Oct. 14, 2020, available at <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/hunter-biden-emails-senate-homeland-security-committee-investigating-hard-drive-laptop>

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u27qy5YViFs>

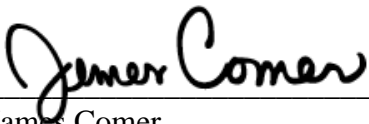
⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Noah Manskar, *Facebook limits spread of The Post's Hunter Biden expose*, NY POST, Oct. 14, 2020, available at <https://nypost.com/2020/10/14/facebook-limits-spread-of-the-posts-hunter-biden-expose/>.

little to limit distribution of negative stories about President Trump or others who may share his political views. This effort to selectively limit speech based on political affiliation is very concerning.

Since the election is in only 19 days and other Big Tech platforms continuously limit speech based on political ideology, we must immediately hold a hearing to learn who are responsible for making these decisions and what policies enable Big Tech to selectively limit speech on social media. In order to prevent further interference in the 2020 election by Big Tech, we request the Committee hold an emergency hearing on this important matter before November 3.

Sincerely,



James Comer
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform



Jody Hice
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government
Operations



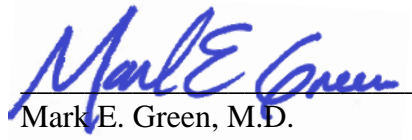
Glenn S. Grothman
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on National Security



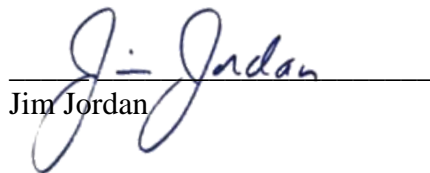
Michael Cloud
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Economic and
Consumer Policy



Chip Roy
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and
Civil Liberties



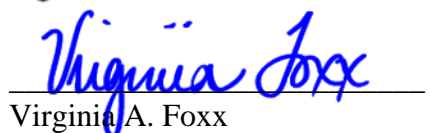
Mark E. Green, M.D.
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Environment



Jim Jordan



Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.

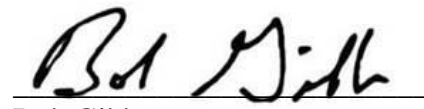


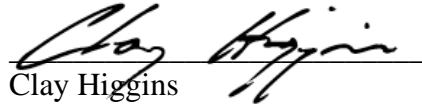
Virginia A. Foxx

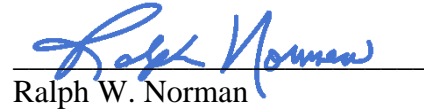


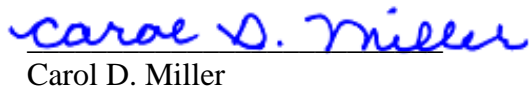
Thomas H. Massie


Gary Palmer

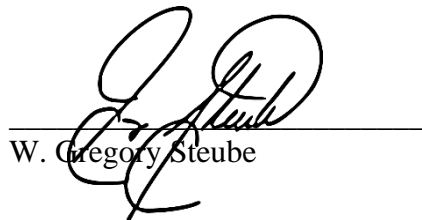

Bob Gibbs


Clay Higgins


Ralph W. Norman


Carol D. Miller


Kelly M. Armstrong


W. Gregory Steube


Fred B. Keller

cc: The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly, Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations

The Honorable Stephen F. Lynch, Chairman
Subcommittee on National Security

The Honorable Raja Krishnamoorthi, Chairman
Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy

The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Chairman
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

The Honorable Harley E. Rouda, Chairman
Subcommittee on Environment