

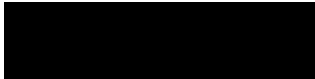


One Hundred Seventeenth Congress

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 that reads "Bennie G. Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B" and a long, sweeping underline.

Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman