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U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

january6th.house.gov
(202) 225-7800

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>.